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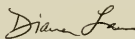
La Primera Cumbre  
de San Francisco  
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THE CONFERENCE REPORT

## DEDICATION

On behalf of all commissioners, staff, and volunteers of the San Francisco Immigrant Rights Commission, I dedicate and submit this report on the proceedings of the First San Francisco Summit on Immigrant Rights, held on September 14, 2002, to the people of the City and County of San Francisco.

*In Partnership Today for a Brighter Tomorrow,*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Diana Lau". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Diana" and last name "Lau" clearly distinguishable.

Diana Lau, RN, MS, CNS  
Chair, San Francisco Immigrant Rights Commission  
Executive Chair, 2002 Summit Planning Committee  
Chief Editor, Summit Report

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# THE SAN FRANCISCO IMMIGRANT RIGHTS COMMISSION

## Organization

The Board of Supervisors of the City of San Francisco adopted ordinance number 211-97 on May 8, 1997, codified in Chapter 5, Article XXI of the San Francisco Administrative Code, establishing the Immigrant Rights Commission. The Commission is charged with the primary duty of providing advice and making recommendations to the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor on issues affecting immigrants working and residing in the City.

## Mission

The mission of the San Francisco Immigrant Rights Commission (SF-IRC) is to improve, enhance and preserve the quality of life and civic participation of all immigrants in the City and County of San Francisco.

To further this goal, the Commission:

- Educates and inspires immigrants to advocate for justice for themselves and their communities;
- Promotes civic participation and mutual respect for all groups;
- Provides information about immigration law and policy to immigrants and their advocates in an effort to raise awareness among immigrants;
- Collaborates with immigrants, community organizations and city agencies to create innovative and constructive solutions to issues involving immigration policy;
- Advises and makes recommendations to the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor concerning on issues affecting the immigrant community.

## Membership

The Commission shall consist of 15 voting members. Eleven members shall be appointed by the Board of Supervisors and four by the Mayor. At least eight members shall be immigrants to the United States who are appointed in accordance with section 4.101 of the Charter. The term of each member of the Commission is two years.

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## INTRODUCTION TO THE REPORT

The first San Francisco Summit on Immigrant Rights was a one-day conference held on September 14, 2002 by the San Francisco Immigrant Rights Commission. This report of the Summit proceedings is comprised of the expressed expert knowledge, culminated working experience and collective wisdom of the summit participants, many of whom are professionals, as well as other interested parties from different community and government sectors who have been serving San Francisco immigrants. It contains pertinent information about San Francisco immigrants that can be utilized as a guide and a catalyst for change, especially in those critical areas of need that have been exacerbated by the past 9/11 terrorist attack, Operation Iraqi Freedom and its aftermath, and the SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) outbreak.

### PURPOSE

This report, not to be mistaken as a mere archive of conference proceedings, is intended to serve as a guiding document to initiate or continue the much needed work for immigrants. It offers a glimpse of the broad terrain of issues, along with their corresponding solutions, and helps its readers to assess the situation from multiple perspectives, prioritize on areas of concern, and point to program areas that are most critical, where government funding, foundation grants and donor gifts can make significant and meaningful impacts towards helping San Francisco immigrants to improve on the quality of their lives.

### SCOPE AND ORGANIZATION

This part is organized into six sections:

Introduction to the Summit introduces the purpose and goals of the conference, provides its background, and raises important questions to be addressed throughout the event day.

WELCOME and KEYNOTE SPEECHES features summaries of the speeches made by the Summit Chair Commissioner Diana Lau, Mayor Willie L. Brown, Jr., the Honorable State Assemblyman Kevin Shelley, Supervisor Chris Daly, City Administrator William Lee, and from the excerpts of speaker notes of the three honored guest speakers, Paul Igarashi, immediate past Vice-Chair of the EEOC, Isabel Alegria and Jeanette Zanitapin, Senior Policy Analysts of the California Immigrant Welfare Collaborative. These speeches provided a necessary perspective of immigrants in the United States and gave current snapshots of the state of affairs, covering new rules and regulations set by the federal government and the Immigration and Naturalization Services.

SUMMARY OF WORKGROUP DISCUSSIONS represents the core of the conference work produced by the ten workgroups, each focusing on a different area of immigrant services. This section's information comes from an edited summary of two sets of discussion notes, one submitted by community organizations' leaders who served as workgroup moderators, and the other submitted by the 26 University of San Francisco graduate students who acted as reporters during the workgroup sessions.

ANALYSIS OF THE WORKGROUP DISCUSSIONS is a post-conference analysis from the discussion of the ten workgroups. It highlights trends, patterns, and any extraordinary features observed and recorded in the panel discussions.

RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE describes the Annual Immigrant Rights Commission Community Service Awards Program and features profiles of the seven honorees receiving the awards.

NEXT STEPS AND CONCLUSION discusses the need for an integrated strategy and coalition based on the recommendations of the ten workgroups and reminds us about our powerful influence as individuals, community-based organizations and government agencies.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Summit, as well as this Summit report, produced with a zero dollar budget, was a brave undertaking from its very beginning, and would not have been possible without the unselfish collaboration and generous contributions of many individuals. In this section, we acknowledge those who have contributed to the Summit as well as this report. Due to the complexity of this project and the large number of volunteers involved, it is possible that there might be oversight in not listing every volunteer involved. To these unsung heroes, the Commission would like to extend our sincere apologies and appreciation just the same. Another partial listing of the contributors are acknowledged in the Summit Program Booklet (see Appendix A, p.70).

## INDIVIDUALS

On behalf of the staff and members of the San Francisco Immigrant Rights Commission, I acknowledge and thank:

Our distinguished speakers: the Honorable Willie L. Brown, Jr., Mayor of San Francisco (1996-2004); the Honorable State Assemblyman Kevin Shelley, California Majority Leader; the Honorable Chris Daly, Supervisor of San Francisco; and Mr. William Lee, City Administrator of San Francisco, for their inspirational welcoming speeches;

Our keynote speakers Paul Igasaki, Immediate Past Vice-Chair of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC); and Isabel Alegria and Jeanette Zanitapin, Senior Policy Analysts at the California Immigrant Welfare Collaborative, for their informational and motivating speeches and for providing their speech notes for this report;

Our Summit workgroup Commissioner coordinators, the Honorable Juan Berumen, Joaquin L. Gonzalez III, Emi Gusukuma, Vera Haile, Isabel Huie, Joseph Nwadiibia, Phu Nguyen, Tamara Ribas, Marlene Tran and Houston Zheng;

Our Summit workgroup moderators Maria Archuleta, Nick Buick, Angela Chu, Laura Efurd, Magaly Fernandez, Daryl Higashi, Darrick Lam, Eric Mar, Gordon Mar, Eugene Wong and Cedric Yap for their leadership in the workgroups and for the submission of their groups' discussion notes;

The graduate students from the University of San Francisco: Sunny Angulo, Emilie Arnaud, Genevieve Barter, John Beveridge, Leigh Bulkeley, Emilia Cerrillo, Neoma Chefalo, Cailin Daly, Summer Ezzat, Natalie Frank, Angelica Gallardo, Juan Garcia, Marsela Gilbert, Jessica Gunderson, Morgan Hamm, Steffany Kisling, Jay Lin, Carlos Menchaca, Ingrid Prado, Jacqueline Rastrullo, Pebbles Remula, Sara Suman, Michiko Thompson, Jerome Tulio, Erin Walters, and Michael Wood, for sharing their school work essays on the workgroup sessions with the Commission;

Our Summit Conference Coordinator, Lucky Choi; the Honorable Commissioner, Vera Haile; Kim Wong Keltner, a writer; Amy J. Markowitz, a professional managing editor; Lester Yuquan Leung, a Harvard University undergraduate student; Suzanne Jonas, professor at the University of California at Santa Cruz and Harriet Ishimoto, staff of Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi's Office; for their contribution to the writing and editing of this report;

Our graphic designer, Starr Starr, for the design of the Summit Briefing;

Our Commission interns, John Paul Capulong, Albert Carrera, Rhea Wong and Michael Wood, for their assistance in gathering and organizing the Summit materials; and, last but not least,

Our City Administrator, Bill Lee, for his guidance and support, and Executive Director, Dang Pham, and Commission Secretary, Winny Loi, for their continuous dedication and tireless efforts.



*SF-IRC Executive Director Dang Pham (left),  
Conference Site Director Jack Moshibacker (middle)  
and SF-IRC Commissioner Phu Nguyen (right)*

## COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Acknowledgement and a complete listing of our community partners can be found in Appendix A, p. 68 - 69.

## SPECIAL THANKS

Among our contributors are a few key individuals whose volunteer contributions were so outstanding that they deserve special mention:

It is my pleasure to acknowledge Lucky Choi, our volunteer Summit Conference Coordinator, for generously sharing his time and expertise not just in conference planning, but also in the writing and editing of this Report.

I would also like to acknowledge three distinguished Commissioners: the Honorable Commissioner Isabel Huie, for chairing the 2002 SF-IRC Community Service Awards Committee; and the Honorable Commissioners Dr. Joaquin L. Gonzalez III and Vera Haile, for co-chairing the Summit Program Committee. Dr. Gonzalez was also responsible for recruiting and training the graduate students from his Politics class at the University of San Francisco to assist in the recording of the workgroup discussions.



*Conference Coordinator Lucky Choi (left) and SF-IRC Commission Secretary Winny Loi (right)*



*Raymond Donald Hong, photojournalist (left), news reporter (middle) and Mayor Willie Brown, Jr. (right)*

Additionally, I would like to acknowledge Raymond Donald Hong for taking pictures for the Summit as well as his technical support behind the scenes.

As for our web site designer and web master Hung Nguyen, his tremendous support, dedication and unreserved, quick response to our request is hard to surpass. Assisting from Washington D.C. where he lives and works, he was still updating and maintaining our website with this report even when he was busily preparing for his wedding and getting ready for the honeymoon! Congratulations, Hung!

And I was fortunate to garner the assistance and advice of Suzanne Jonas, an expert scholar in the area of immigrant issues, and Harriet Ishimoto, a senior staff in Congresswoman Nancy

Pelosi's office who has been a long-time immigrant advocate. Both of them kindly offered valuable perspectives on the report from different viewpoints.

My sincere gratitude goes to Kim Wong Keltner, author of the new book, *The Dim Sum of All Things* (2004), who graciously agreed to take up a major editorial role for the Summit report during the eleventh hour.

Also, much appreciation goes to Julie Ann Yuen, the talented graphic artist who has spent many volunteer hours not just helping with the design of the informational flyer for the Summit, but assisted also with the design and production of this report amidst meeting different deadlines for her own clients.

And this report would not have been possible without the generous donation in printing and consultation services by Edith Wong and James Chao of 38 Productions, Inc.

Finally, last but not least, I would like to thank my husband, Chris, and my son, Hubert, for their understanding and encouragement in support of my consuming community work in the planning and execution of the Summit as well as in the writing of this report and other related documents.



# THE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

By Commissioner Diana Lau, RN, MS, CNS  
Chair, San Francisco Immigrant Rights Commission  
Executive Chair of the 2002 Summit Planning Committee

## INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

In its mission to improve the quality of life for local immigrants, the San Francisco Immigrant Rights Commission (SF-IRC) reached a milestone in September 2002 when it organized the first San Francisco Summit on Immigrant Rights. The ambitious goals of this ground-breaking event were to raise the level of local as well as national awareness about this underserved multi-ethnic sector, and to create a coordinated response to meet their needs. To achieve its aim, the Commission brought together members of the immigrant constituency, as well as representatives from a broad range of government agencies and community-based organizations. Many of the Summit attendees had experience or expertise related to serving the immigrant population.

Comprising roughly 27% of San Francisco's population (Census 2000 data), immigrants have played a significant role in developing this city's economy as well as its rich and renowned cultural fabric. But while recognizing that immigrants are an integral part of the City, there remains a serious need to address their continual struggle with scapegoating, discrimination, assimilation, identity, or the challenges of mere survival in an unfamiliar society.

Recent events, including Operation Iraqi Freedom, and SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome), have cast a pall on an already marginalized community whose members continue to experience the repercussions from the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack. While these tragedies hold grave physical, psychological, and economic implications for us all, immigrants suffer most acutely.

Additionally, in step with the changing times affecting the community-at-large, issues specific to our immigrant community continue to grow in complexity and number. The budgetary and job cuts caused by the economic downturn also have irrefutable repercussions on many immigrant service programs. And although a limited amount of quality assistance is still available to help immigrants, the scaling down or elimination of some of these programs will eventually impact the most needy.

Another important goal of the conference was to create the groundwork for a strategic plan to address many of the top issues facing immigrants. Summit organizers channeled the myriad of issues into ten community service areas and workgroups as follow: civil rights; economic development; education; health, aging and veterans; housing and shelter; jobs and employment; language access; naturalization; political participation; and youth and families. The Commission invited a panel of experts in each of these areas to facilitate discussions within the workgroups. Issues were examined from multiple perspectives, and participants, who represented the private, non-profit, and government sectors worked in partnership to refine the scope of the problems in each area, identify key issues and recommend solutions.

We do recognize that immigrants are ultimately responsible for improving the quality of life themselves. They have to take responsibility to learn additional language and vocational skills, among other skills, and to adapt to changes quickly. However, the society does play an instrumental role in facilitating all these changes. As a community, we can welcome and embrace new immigrants, or contrarily, neglect, or worse, despise them. We can also enable or hinder the acculturation and assimilation of immigrants into our society. Through policy setting and many other ways, we can influence this process and make it either humanely expeditious or agonizingly slow.

Ultimately, the community-at-large needs to recognize that problems of the immigrants are actually problems of the entire community, so when immigrants receive the needed assistance to alleviate their problems, problems in the community as a whole will diminish accordingly.

In all fairness to immigrants, in as much as we have concentrated our efforts dealing mainly with problem areas during this Summit, we also recognize their many contributions to the City's multi dimensions and growth. This acknowledgement helps the community to develop a more positive and inclusive attitude and counteract some of the "us" versus "them" mentality. The cultivation of mutual respect, tolerance as well as an appreciation for each other form a major step towards enabling us to live in harmony in this high-density city.

The workgroup design in the Summit was the Planning Committee's attempt to engage the immigrant and the general communities together to assess key issues and to formulate corresponding solutions to improve the immigrants' quality of life.



## **A SUMMARY OF THE INTRODUCTORY, WELCOME AND CONGRATULATORY SPEECHES**

The introductory and welcoming speeches were delivered by the Honorable Commissioner Diana Lau, RN, MS, CNS, Executive Chair of the Summit Committee and Chair of the San Francisco Immigrant Rights Commission; the Honorable Willie L. Brown, Jr., two-term Mayor of the City and County of San Francisco; and Mr. Bill Lee, the City Administrator who oversees the San Francisco Immigrant Rights Commission. Other welcome and congratulatory remarks were made by the Honorable Kevin Shelley, California Assembly Majority Leader; and the Honorable Chris Daly, Supervisor of the Tenderloin district where many of San Francisco's Southeast Asian immigrants live.

### **Summit Chair Diana Lau**

Ms. Lau hailed the Summit as a long overdue event and attributed part of its significance to the collaboration and participation of many community and government leader-partners who have been serving immigrants. She encouraged the participants to actively participate in the Summit and to use it as a springboard for doing more future work to assist San Francisco's immigrant community.

### **Mayor Willie L. Brown**

Mayor Brown congratulated the Commission for the Summit, underscored the importance and contribution of immigrants to the City and stressed that the power of the immigrants lies in their unity and their ability to flex political clout by exercising their voting rights.

### **State Assemblyman Kevin Shelley City Supervisor Chris Daly City Administrator Bill Lee**

Mr. Bill Lee, State Assemblyman Kevin Shelley and Supervisor Chris Daly also congratulated the San Francisco Immigrant Rights Commission for its extraordinary contribution and strong leadership as demonstrated by the creation of this ground-breaking event. They emphasized the importance of this conference in light of the large and ever-increasing population of immigrants living in the City.

## A SUMMARY OF THE KEYNOTE SPEECHES

### Paul Igasaki: Keynote Address on Immigrant Rights

Mr. Igasaki spoke eloquently about his public experience at the EEOC in dealing with charges of intolerance, job discrimination, language and accent discrimination, language access, scapegoating, prejudices, conflicts, hate crimes, harassment, racial profiling, and more.

He lamented that even though EEOC does not request immigration documentation from those they serve, immigrants rarely go to the EEOC with complaints because of many underlying fears and barriers. In this society's zealous search for the "other", especially those who are physically different or racial or ethnic minorities, immigrants often are scapegoated for the difficulties that we all face together. Mr. Igasaki also cited his grandfather's experience that he was being accused of using "codes" when he was merely taking meeting minutes in Japanese.

Mr. Igasaki boldly unveiled the ploy of using initiatives to incorporate discriminatory views of immigrants or minorities into public policy. He also warned about the isolation that could possibly result by shutting doors to immigrants as an ineffective measure to control terrorism, and its danger of inadvertently weakening us culturally, economically and spiritually. He reminded us that this is a nation of immigrants and that our language and religious diversity are actually our strengths.

Finally, he encouraged the SF-IRC and leaders of this community to help steer the nation in new and constructive directions that can further facilitate bonding and solidify unity.

### Isabel Alegria: Update Briefing on INS Rules and Immigration Issues

Ms. Alegria gave details about the many changes and backlashes experienced by immigrants since 9/11, and helped to set the background for the workgroup to enhance their discussions. Two major government creations, the Patriot Act and the Department of Homeland Security, have wreaked havoc in the immigrant community. The Patriot Act caused many long time legal airport screeners in the Bay Area to lose their jobs, and the Department of Homeland Security has stirred excessive concerns that immigrants might threaten national security, which in turn might lead to a reduction of immigration services and further backlogs.

She also raised strong concern about the effects of the severe restrictions on vital safety net benefits imposed by the welfare and immigration laws of 1996, which have had long-lasting impacts on health care, food assistance, job training and housing.

On a more positive note, she explained why and how the following three federal proposals can positively affect California immigrants and should be supported:

- the food stamp restorations in the Farm Bill,
- a proposal to restore healthcare benefits for children and pregnant women under the reauthorization of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), and
- a proposal to allow young people without documents to gain lawful status.

## Jeanette Zanitapin: Immigrant Rights Bills Move to the Governor's Desk

Ms. Zanitapin discussed the bills that affect immigrants, particularly those that need further advocacy for the Governor to enact them into law. Updated information on the status and text of these bills can also be found at the Legislative Counsel's Bill Information website at [www.leginfo.ca.gov/billinfo.html](http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/billinfo.html).

The following bills were discussed:

**SB 987 (Escutia):** which ensures proper implementation and enforcement of the Dymally-Alatorre Bilingual Services Act, requiring state agencies that serve limited English-proficient clients to develop a plan to address the language needs of the populations they serve.

**AB 1947 (Washington):** CalWORKs & Food Stamps Eligibility which exempts individuals who are enrolled in a drug treatment program under Proposition 36 from the lifetime ban on CalWORKs and food stamps.

**AB 2386 (Keeley):** CalWORKs Time Limits which extends the 18-24 month time limit for CalWORKs participants engaged in education or training programs under specific circumstances.

**SB 59 (Escutia):** Pilot Projects for Homeless and Immigrant Children which requires MRMIIB to develop recommendations for innovative health care projects available under the SCHIP 1115 waiver to address the needs of vulnerable populations including immigrant and homeless children.

**SB 1654 (Burton):** Office of Homelessness which establishes this Office within the Governor's office. The Office of Homelessness would collaborate with state agencies to assist with shelter, healthcare, mental health, and emergency housing needs of the homeless population.

**AB 2739 (Chan):** Managed Care Standards which codifies and makes more uniform the cultural and linguistic requirements for health plans that participate in MediCal managed care and the Healthy Families program.

**AB 3035 (Judiciary Committee):** Access to Government Programs that clarifies programs operated or funded by state agencies are prohibited from discriminating based on race or national origin.

**ACR 229 (Firebaugh & Diaz):** Mexican Matriculas/Cedulas Resolution which urges cities and counties throughout California to accept the Mexican Consular identification cards, known as the "Matricula Consular," as an official form of identification. Since 9/11, immigrants have been asked to present valid ID upon entering some county and local offices and to the police.

**AJR 57 (Firebaugh & Diaz):** INS & Police Cooperation Resolution which states that state and local law enforcement agencies lack the authority to stop, arrest, or detain persons based on suspected or alleged violations of federal immigration laws.

**AB 60 (Cedillo):** Driver's Licenses which seeks to permit people who do not have a Social Security number to apply for a driver's license.

**SB 804 (Polanco):** which has several restrictive amendments to single out immigrants, including the imposition of criminal background checks for immigrants only and the denial of driver's licenses for immigrants with certain convictions, arrests pending adjudication and "wants and warrants".

**AB 116 (Nakano):** APIA Commission which creates a state Asian Pacific Islander American Advisory Commission.

**AB 2837 (Koretz):** CalOSHA which requires Cal/OSHA to provide more bilingual services and would tighten investigative and reporting procedures in cases of workplace deaths.

**SB 1736 (Burton):** Binding arbitration that would allow thousands of California's farm workers to use binding arbitration to negotiate contracts with their employers.

**SB 1818 (Romero):** Hoffman Decision which mitigates the adverse impact of the Supreme Court's recent decision by assessing meaningful penalties against exploitive employers who are found violating the rights of immigrant workers, regardless of immigration status.

## A BRIEFING OF THE TEN WORKGROUP/ PANEL DISCUSSION

The following notes are highlights of key issues identified and corresponding solutions formulated from the ten workgroup discussion sessions. We encourage readers to examine the full report at :

<[www.sfimmigrantsummit.org](http://www.sfimmigrantsummit.org)>.

AREAS	KEY ISSUES	SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS
Civil Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in discrimination and racial profiling of immigrants</li> <li>• Under-reporting of hate crimes</li> <li>• Unfair government policies and practices targeting immigrants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address problems with assertive advocacy</li> <li>• Collaborate among government and community service agencies that work with immigrant groups</li> <li>• Conduct cultural sensitivity training for the San Francisco Police Department and airport employees</li> <li>• Communicate a clear stand against the Patriot Act and hate crimes</li> </ul>
Economic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication gaps in jobs, vocational training, loan opportunities and the application processes</li> <li>• Non-recognition of foreign credentials or degrees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give information to the ethnic media to publicize business programs, jobs and loans</li> <li>• Facilitate recognition of foreign credentials</li> <li>• Provide online access to new and existing economic opportunities and more job training</li> <li>• Develop more business loan programs for immigrants</li> </ul>
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of sufficient translated materials and bilingual staff at school sites</li> <li>• Need for more ESL and vocational programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Form a collaborative approach with the SF Unified School District, SF City College, and the immigrant community</li> <li>• Use bilingual staff, translators or student volunteers</li> <li>• Develop a central resource office</li> <li>• Make available more language-appropriate information pamphlets</li> <li>• Encourage ethnic media reporting</li> </ul>
Health, Aging and Immigrant Veterans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delay, denial and reluctance in seeking medical treatment</li> <li>• Fear of being reported to the INS (undocumented individuals)</li> <li>• Difficulty in navigating the complex network of healthcare systems</li> <li>• Lack of healthcare insurance</li> <li>• Language and cultural barriers</li> <li>• Low income levels</li> <li>• Poor living conditions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create more culturally-sensitive and language-appropriate healthcare programs and informational materials</li> <li>• Build a stronger coalition among the community-based organizations,</li> <li>• Publish healthcare report cards</li> <li>• Extend hours of operation of the Public Health Centers</li> <li>• Use ethnic media to deliver health information</li> </ul>
Housing and Shelter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for more housing subsidies</li> <li>• Need for childcare, healthcare, increased security and other programs in public housing</li> <li>• Need for more translated information, bilingual staff, and ethnic media</li> <li>• Need for improving substandard living conditions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build Public Interest Partnership (PIP)</li> <li>• Hire more bilingual staff</li> <li>• Made available more language-appropriate information and forms</li> <li>• Train existing housing staff in language and cultural sensitivity</li> <li>• Enforce housing standards</li> <li>• Seek more federal and state money</li> </ul>

AREAS	KEY ISSUES	SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS
Jobs and Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High unemployment rate</li> <li>• Lack of language and vocational skills</li> <li>• Below minimal wage and no overtime compensation</li> <li>• Inadequate job training and access</li> <li>• "Glass ceiling" effect</li> <li>• Harsh, substandard, and unsafe work conditions</li> <li>• Fear of repercussions from employers</li> <li>• Fear of deportation by the INS</li> <li>• A general lack of knowledge of labor laws by both employers and employees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase English proficiency resources</li> <li>• Secure resources to create more jobs</li> <li>• Develop more training programs to develop new vocational skills</li> <li>• Educate workforce regarding labor laws</li> <li>• Make timely adjustment to the living wage laws</li> <li>• Enforce work safety and environment standards</li> </ul>
Language Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insufficient research to identify specific gaps in services as a result of poor language access</li> <li>• Insufficient bilingual staff, translation services and information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enforce the Equal Access to Services Ordinance adopted in June 2000</li> <li>• Encourage immigrants to learn English</li> <li>• Establish an Immigrants' Central Information Office as a one-stop shop for translation services and other assistance</li> <li>• Educate existing customer service staff in cultural sensitivity and language</li> <li>• Enlist bilingual college students as translators</li> <li>• Conduct more research on language access</li> </ul>
Naturalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General lack of knowledge of INS functioning, leading to misconceptions and fears</li> <li>• Escalating fees for naturalization application</li> <li>• Domestic partners' immigration and visitor status jeopardized as rules on immigration have been tightened up significantly since the 9/11 terrorist attack</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase citizenship preparation classes</li> <li>• Educate immigrants on INS functioning to dispel unfounded fears</li> <li>• Create loan programs to assist with the high INS application fees</li> <li>• Increase legal counseling and resources regarding unique domestic partnership issues</li> </ul>
Political Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of a good grasp of the structure and functioning of the American political and government systems</li> <li>• Lack of understanding about obligations and voting rights as U.S. citizens</li> <li>• Political apathy and low voter registration and turnout</li> <li>• Inadequate advocacy for immigrant groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultivate more leadership from within the immigrant groups</li> <li>• Develop language-appropriate classes and handouts such as government resource guides, tours, meetings, etc.</li> <li>• Ethnic media to deliver critical information and education in their own languages</li> <li>• College student volunteers to teach some naturalization and citizenship classes in return for college credit</li> </ul>
Youth and Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insufficient support and expand community-based agencies that serve immigrant youths and families</li> <li>• Insufficient government as well as private funding</li> <li>• Language and cultural barriers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Form collaborative effort between the government and the community-based organizations to help prioritize issues</li> <li>• Use neighborhood meetings as a good outreach method</li> <li>• Seek additional support for childcare services, counseling and education</li> </ul>

## SUMMARY

The issues recorded here, hardly foreign to San Francisco's community, represent only a fraction of the problems faced by immigrants. They are the most urgent ones, grated by the backdrop of the hostile environment that immigrants currently live in.

These ten workgroup discussions brought out the generally anti-immigrant atmosphere, disharmony, and imbalance in San Francisco in spite of its large immigrant community. The anti-immigrant sentiment has been greatly accentuated ever since the 9/11 event and might have gotten worse over time. The disharmony underscores the tension that has been escalating between the immigrant and non-immigrant groups living together in this precarious post 9/11 and post-Iraqi war environment, amidst fears of the SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) and repercussions of the global economic downturn. This imbalance is aggravated by the disproportionate, inadequate and fragmented resources and support available for easing immigrants' many unmet needs.

In addition to boldly addressing the imbalance, disharmony and the various disparities facing the immigrant community, this conference discussed the emotional disengagement, social apathy and the "us" versus "them" mentality. We hold a strong belief that changing the resentful attitudes towards immigrants will help restore harmony and promote coherency, and that a more positive live-together, work-together and help-each-other mentality will enable decision makers to have the proper mindset to distribute available resources more equitably between immigrants and non-immigrants, in addition to promoting a state of emotional harmony in living together in this high density city.

Here, let us not forget that most Americans, with the notable exception of Native Americans, are immigrants or immigrant descendants. Keeping that in mind can help us bolster our efforts to help especially the newly-arrived immigrants resolve adjustment issues in a compassionate manner. After all, it is in San Francisco's best interest to minimize immigrants' hardships so they can become productive citizens and integrate with society as quickly as possible.

The workgroup format utilized in the Summit provided the opportunity that facilitated the identification and assessment of key issues facing immigrants, as well as the formulation of relevant, coherent and pragmatic solutions. This work, neither a beginning nor an end, was merely part of a continuum in the zealous search for effective outcomes through the implementation of some, if not all, of the suggested solutions.

Agencies that provide immigrant services can play a definitive role to assist immigrants by becoming better connected with each other and enhancing or developing programs to address existing gaps in meeting immigrants' needs, which in turn will enable them to problem solve more efficiently and expediently. The importance of the support to these community-based organizations and government agencies to ensure their survival and continuation of the important immigrant support services simply cannot be over-emphasized. In this aspect, we sincerely hope that funding agencies can play a stronger supportive role.

We wish that this Executive Summary can inspire you to pursue reading of the full report and to take action. The full report contains detailed information of the Summit proceedings, and is available at the SF-IRC websites (see below) or by contacting the SF-IRC office.

On behalf of our immigrant community, we urge you to actively support our work in all ways possible. We need your support and voluntary efforts now more than ever before. That can come in the form of keeping a positive attitude towards immigrants; accepting them for their different cultures, values, customs and language accents; extending a helping hand when the opportunity arises; and denouncing discrimination and hate crimes when you encounter them; just to name a few.

We also encourage you to share this report with your legislators, funders, community leaders, and anyone who can have influence through policy making, allocating funding and resources, or making social changes to help immigrants feel supported and welcome to live in San Francisco. Working in partnership, we can realize the vision to maintain San Francisco as a truly welcoming city for all immigrants.

We welcome your comments and suggestions regarding the Summit and the Summit report.

Please email us through one of the websites:  
<[www.sfimmigrantsummit.org](http://www.sfimmigrantsummit.org)> or  
<[www.sfgov.org/immigrant](http://www.sfgov.org/immigrant)>

Or write to our office directly:  
**Office of the Immigrant Rights Commission**  
City Hall, Rm 453  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place  
San Francisco, CA 94102

# THE SUMMIT REPORT



## INTRODUCTION TO THE SUMMIT – ESTABLISHING CONTEXT

### **By The Honorable Commissioner Diana Lau, RN, MS, CNS**

Chair, San Francisco Immigrant Rights Commission  
Executive Chair, 2002 Summit Planning Committee

### **A BRIEF INTRODUCTION**

The San Francisco Immigrant Rights Commission organized the first San Francisco Summit on Immigrant Rights as one of the ways to engage private entities and government departments together to further the Commission's mission of improving, enhancing and preserving the quality of life and civic participation of all immigrants in San Francisco.

On the day of the event, about 300 conference participants gathered along with a delegation of over 80 representatives from community nonprofits, government service agencies and private businesses that provide community services to San Francisco's immigrants.

With the aim of fostering an ongoing collaboration and partnership, the Summit workgroup sessions were purposely designed to actively engage the participants to share their knowledge, wisdom and expertise in serving the immigrant community and to influence decision makers to distribute available resources more equitably for immigrants. In doing so, it supported as well as reflected the importance of the conference theme, "In Partnership Today for a Brighter Tomorrow."

### **BACKGROUND**

According to the 2000 Census reports, foreign-born residents made up more than 27.5% of the San Francisco Bay Area population, making San Francisco one of the largest immigrant communities in the nation. Coming from over 150 different countries, immigrants not only contribute to our City's rich cultural diversity, they also support its economic base and attract tourism and international trade.

Some people tend to view part of the immigrant community, especially the Chinese community, which is the largest group of immigrants in San Francisco, as a model minority group. That is a misconception that sometimes shadows the need of some of the immigrants who actually span a wide spectrum from the very rich to the very poor, from the highly-educated to the uneducated, and from the law-abiding citizens to the law-breakers.

A report, released in 2003 by Northeastern University, states that dollar for dollar, immigrants as a whole contribute more in taxes than they utilize in public services. This information supports the notion that immigrants are actually beneficial to our society and directly contradicts another common misconception that immigrants are a drain to society's resources. Thus, helping immigrants to integrate and acculturate has been and will always be an important need in our society.

Immigrants throughout history have suffered a disproportionate share of racial profiling and injustice. They become the usual target of scapegoating especially during war and economic crisis. During the nation's continued economic downturn in the last few years and after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack, Mr. Igasaki, the Summit's keynote speaker, pointed out that the physical, cultural and behavioral differences have caused immigrants, especially those from the Middle Eastern countries, to be seen as "prime suspects in endangering our national security."

The fanning of the flames of anti-immigrant discrimination continues to gravely impact the lives of many immigrants, impacting their basic needs such as job security, income, affordable housing, safety from violence and hate-crimes, domestic-partnership rights, and physical and mental health. The problems generated as a consequence of these conflicts and disharmony have culminated a higher demand for the many different types of immigrant service programs.

Unfortunately, this increased need of human services coincides with one of the biggest economic downturns of all time and faces the uncertainties in the sustainability of many of these programs. Several of such community-based



organizations (CBOs) facing major budget cuts have appeared before the Immigrant Rights and other City Commissions urging our support and assistance to retain their original funding level and/or minimize the cutback from City funding.

As a response to these challenges, the Summit was created to offer opportunities for the diverse group of service providers to create synergy. While acknowledging that much good work is already in place, the Summit pushed for new horizons with integrated programs to meet the needs and improve access for those services that have already been established.

**PURPOSE**

The Summit was created as a response to two main issues: the recent economic challenges and dwindling funds faced by many immigrant community service agencies, and the growing waves of anti-immigrant discrimination, especially to non-white immigrants, since the September 11 terrorist attack. The date of the Summit was planned to coincide with the week of September 11 as a reminder of the tragic event and its still rippling effect from the aftermath. The Summit also symbolically celebrated the San Francisco Immigrant Rights Commission's 4th year anniversary by recognizing organizations that have done outstanding work for immigrants in the past year with community service awards for excellence in leadership and services.

**SCOPE**

The one-day Summit program included welcome and keynote addresses, a briefing and update on immigration issues, two breakout workgroup sessions of problem identification and strategic planning in ten areas that impact immigrants, a plenary workgroup report session, and the 2002 SF-IRC Community Service Awards ceremony. There were also information table displays by some immigrant community service organizations.

**OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the Summit were:

- to build a common platform of collaboration by bringing together individuals, community-based nonprofits and government entities interested in the well-being of the immigrant community;
- to enable these participants to initiate an ongoing dialogue based on new or refreshed alliances across sectors;
- to foster awareness of the importance of these community-based organizations and acknowledge those who have demonstrated exceptional service; and
- to lay the foundation for the creation of an integrated strategic plan to enable these agencies to optimize the use of their limited resources and to enhance the efficacy, relevance and accessibility of their programs.

*Commissioners Diana Lau (left),  
Isabel Huie (middle) and Vera Hauke (right)*



## WELCOME AND KEYNOTE SPEECHES

This section features the highlights of the welcoming and keynote speeches. It provides a current snapshot of the state of affairs for today's immigrants and covers new rules and regulations set by the INS since September 11, 2001. This information was of great importance in creating a referendum to guide the workgroup discussions and formulate tentative solutions.

### THE CHAIR'S INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME ADDRESS

#### **By The Honorable Commissioner Diana Lau, RN, MS, CNS**

Chair, San Francisco Immigrant Rights Commission  
Executive Chair, 2002 Summit Planning Committee

Ms. Lau welcomed the Summit participants to this inaugural San Francisco Summit on Immigrant Rights on behalf of all the Commissioners and staff of the Immigrant Rights Commission. The Summit was created under the vision and leadership of the San Francisco Immigrant Rights Commissioners, sponsored by the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco and supported by the community-based organizations and the government entities that the participants represent.

From idea conception, incubation, to realization of the ambitious undertaking of creating this first Summit on Immigrant Rights, Ms. Lau stated that it helps to set the stage for improving San Francisco's immigrants' quality of life through organizations and community leaders partnering and working together.

She said that this Summit also has the potential to make a real difference, not just to the San Francisco immigrants, but also through its far-reaching effects to immigrants in other parts of the nation.

Ms. Lau reiterated that ever since the September 11 terrorist attack in 2001 and the huge stock market slide, many people, especially immigrants, have felt major impacts and suffered inadvertent consequences. She urged the Summit participants to do some soul searching, reflecting, strategizing and bonding to become a stronger voice for the immigrant community.

Ms. Lau encouraged participants to be active contributors and not passive listeners. She believed that in sharing, it was possible that we might find ourselves more alike than different, and we would have gone one giant step closer to conquer the big divide.

So she implored the participants to reach out to share their thoughts, their dreams, and their cultures with each other during the Summit, in the hope that we could come closer to make some major progress towards improving the lives of immigrants.



In conclusion, she thanked the participants for their presence and partnership in this historical event for the City and County of San Francisco.

*Mayor Willie L. Brown, Jr. and Commissioner Diana Lau*

## THE MAYORAL ADDRESS ON THE FIRST IMMIGRANT RIGHTS SUMMIT

**By the Honorable Willie L. Brown, Jr.**

The Mayor of San Francisco

The Mayor proudly proclaimed that San Francisco is predominately non-native and arguably one of the most diverse cities in the world. Since his induction as Mayor, the lack of diversity amongst city politicians and community leaders quickly changed. He has since appointed a Chinese-American police chief and a Latino fire chief.

The Mayor spoke of the "empowerment of the have-nots." It is this democratic empowerment, through voting and selecting our own representatives, that can create the political power to push for the immigrants' agenda.

The main problem for immigrants, as pinpointed by the Mayor, was the lack of representation and political cohesiveness. He called for uniting the immigrant votes to create the much needed political clout.

## OTHER WELCOMING ADDRESSES ON THE FIRST IMMIGRANT RIGHTS SUMMIT

**By the Honorable Kevin Shelley**

California Assembly Majority Leader

**By the Honorable Chris Daly**

Supervisor of San Francisco

**By Mr. William Lee**

City Administrator of San Francisco

The Honorable Assemblyman Kevin Shelley, Supervisor Chris Daly and City Administrator William Lee individually welcomed participants to the Summit and congratulated the San Francisco Immigrant Rights Commission for their extraordinary contribution and strong leadership for immigrants in the City of San Francisco. They addressed the importance of the Summit, as reflected by the growing number of immigrants in the city, as well as their many diverse needs. The Summit was a good example of how people could work together to address some of these needs and problem solve.

## KEYNOTE ADDRESS ON IMMIGRANT RIGHTS

**By Paul Igasaki**

Immediate Past Vice-Chair

U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)



*Keynote Speaker Paul Igasaki*

Mr. Igasaki emphasized that intolerance for immigrants is evident in hate crimes committed against South Asians and Arab Americans, and in the creation of initiatives that have translated discriminatory views of immigrants or minorities into public policy.

He claimed that California is a test tube in which public attitudes and policies relating to diversity and immigrants have been piloted, and that ideas and movements generated from here can have a national or even global impact.

The leadership potential that this community provides will help steer this nation in new and constructive directions. Probably, his highest priority, in addition to restructuring how EEOC has handled discrimination charges, was to help the agency prioritize its services to those who are underserved.

Mr. Igasaki used his grandfather as an example: As the Secretary of the Celery Growers' Association and a community leader, his grandfather was once held in a Department of Justice detention camp because he took minutes of their meetings in "code." The so-called "code" was actually the Japanese language because his grandfather could not write in English.

Recently, Mr. Igasaki was in Sacramento and he heard about the publisher of the Sacramento Bee being shouted down by Sacramento State students at a commencement ceremony after she called for tolerance and respect for neighbors of Middle Eastern, South Asian or Muslim background. This incident showed that emotion and anger often gets channeled towards a closer, more vulnerable target: a religion, people from another region of the world, or immigrants.

Some people are convinced that the answer to controlling terrorism is to shut all of our doors completely and even to force out those who are more recent Americans. Mr. Igasaki reminded participants that is not a new idea, but is one that has never worked. For in this time especially, our nation's greatest strength is the world that exists within our borders. Isolation weakens us culturally, economically and spiritually. He reminded participants that this is a nation of immigrants. Our language and religious diversity are our strengths. To deny that is to destroy the most basic of American values. Demanding that America be what it has promised to be and adhering to the principles that truly bind us together as a nation are important ways for all of us to respond to the terrorist attacks.

Mr. Igasaki said that the EEOC, charged with enforcing this nation's job discrimination laws, responded quickly to the reports of hate crimes that occur in the workplace and to harassment and firings based on ethnicity or religion. When there have been conflicts in the Middle East, from the Iranian hostage crisis to the Gulf War, hate crimes and discrimination have followed.

Following the destruction of the federal building in Oklahoma City, and before we learned that the alleged perpetrator was a white American, the scapegoating of Arab or Moslem Americans or those who appeared to be so was in full swing. Just as some of the backlash against Japanese Americans in the 1940's were felt by Chinese and other Asian Americans, much of the backlash, including the first clear hate murder, involved Sikhs whose turbans and beards, required by their faith, caused them to be targeted, even though none of the apparent terrorists were so attired.

Prejudice is neither logical nor thoughtful. Mr. Igasaki gave another example of his daughter, then six years old, told him that one of their classmates said, in front of her good friend who wears a turban, that her family hates people with beards. This sort of ignorant targeting, being discussed by kids before they have fully absorbed our society's bigotries, is no worse than the scapegoating of people who embody the ethnicity of those involved in terrorism. When hate criminals beat Vincent Chin to death with baseball bats in Detroit, ostensibly out of anger about Japanese auto imports, their hate was unabated when they learned that he was Chinese, not Japanese American. Within the context of terrorism and hate crimes, it is obvious that racial profiling is not only illegal, it is also not sensible. Timothy McVeigh was not an Arab American. The killer who went on a spree of hate violence targeting an African American, Jewish Americans and an Asian American was also Caucasian, not Arab American.

Mr. Igasaki gave some statistics. The EEOC has, since its conception only the year before, received some 600 complaints involving scapegoating related to the 9/11 attacks. Religious discrimination complaints by Moslems have increased by more than 200%. As for other forms of discrimination, the largest employment action involved was dismissal, occurring in about half of the charges.

Harassment, also up significantly, makes up about a third of the charges. The states with the largest shares of complaints in these categories are California, Texas and Michigan. The charges are made by the people of Arab American, South Asian American and even Latino ethnicities. While Mr. Igasaki was Vice Chair, he traveled widely to all regions of the country to meet with both South Asian and Arab American communities as well as Sikh and Moslem groups to discuss employment discrimination following September 11th; he heard of many more incidents where the parties have not filed charges. Organizations reported still more incidents.

He gave the following examples: The Sodhi family in Arizona found their brother shot to death following September 11th outside his gas station by a self-proclaimed patriot. Mr. Sodhi was Sikh. In Chicago, following September 11th, an angry mob of White residents had to be kept away from a mosque by police lines, as they shouted "USA, USA!"

In an environment of fear, where the government itself is seen as threatening, it is hard to expect people to take the risk of asserting their rights, especially by challenging their employer. Yet, unless they do, Mr. Igasaki pointed out that the law could do little to protect them. There have been allegations, for example, of an employer returning to his office after September 11th, berating Arabs and Moslems in front of two Arab American accountants in his office before firing them the next day, citing work performance despite positive evaluations and 17 years of service. Workers have complained of suspensions or lost work assignments due allegedly to their ethnicity or religion.

Harassment has ranged from allegations of physical attacks, shouting, epithets, bigoted signs, threats such as "All you Arabs should be killed," and vicious e-mails. A caller to a television show reported that her husband was in a workplace that allowed the use of foreign languages by its employees, but they were told that these no longer included Arabic following September 11th.

There are increasing reports of employers harring their employees from wearing turbans or hijabs, head scarves which some Moslem women wear, or from growing beards. Employees who once were allowed areas to pray were denied to do so. Beards or clothing must be mandated by one's religion in order for laws to be invoked.

There has always been a tendency to view new Americans with suspicion and to blame them for hardships or inconveniences due to their presence, in anything ranging from crime to overcrowding. The newest groups, and, especially those who are physically different, racial or ethnic minorities, are often targets.

A columnist in Chicago reprinted a column blaming immigrants for riots, crime, disease and joblessness. In the end, the writer revealed that the targets were Germans a century before, moving into the same neighborhoods in which Hispanics now live. It isn't a new thing, the search for the "other" who is somehow responsible for the difficulties that we all face together. The "other" is us. America is a nation that changes with each new resident, new worker, new neighbor. But historically, the "we" has often excluded people that are different.

Jesse Jackson has said: all of us come from someplace else, except the Native Americans. For the rest of us, despite claims that we are diluting the American gene pool, that we could never fit in or never learn the language, we have added positively to this nation's fabric. There is no American religion; there is no American race or ethnic group. Despite the claims of some, there is no American language. All ethnic food is American food. The agreement that we will protect each other's right to be different is American. It cannot be a value that we sacrifice or the United States ceases to be.

Mr. Igasaki remembered Professor Bill Hing at the University of California at Davis citing a 1923 Supreme Court case, *US v. Bhagat Singh Thind*, during which the Supreme Court acknowledged that the rights of people in a society that acknowledged superior rights of the White race would be determined not by science but by "the great body of our people instinctively recognizing the racial difference." In other words, we know it when we see it; if you're different, you're not American. The law has moved a long way since then.

Despite the fact that racist immigration laws have been changed, discrimination continues in defiance of law. And for many, difference and "foreignness" depend still on what we can see and hear as familiar. While we have no national religion, a mosque, to the mob in Chicago, was clearly not "American." And chanting "USA, USA" to demean fellow Americans who happened to be Moslem had some meaning to many of them. Enforcing the laws against discrimination is the answer to these old prejudices.

EEOC enforces laws against job discrimination. People come to this country in search of jobs are protected by laws enforced by State agencies or the Department of Labor, ensuring that they be paid fairly in accordance with the law and that the conditions they work under are safe. The National Labor Relations Board guards them against unfair labor practices and protects their rights to act collectively. The EEOC oversees that in hiring, in the terms or conditions of employment and in dismissals, these actions are not taken based on race, nationality, religion, gender, age or disability.

Government agencies traditionally wait to serve those who come to them, but our immigrant communities are the least likely to pursue their rights. This is due to lack of information, concern about possible language barriers, fear - rational or irrational - of the government and factors that are either historical or cultural. It is EEOC's duty to serve all Americans by removing the barriers to service, such as by hiring more employees that are multilingual.

President Clinton and now President Bush have both committed government agencies to remove the language access barriers that exist in most agencies, but language and accent discrimination in the workplace still remains a big problem. It has been the position of the EEOC that an employer's ban on the use of languages other than English must serve a legitimate business purpose. Failing that, it is recognized as national origin discrimination. Situations in which one can't speak in his own language in break or lunch areas or classrooms are discriminatory.

There are cases where accent is used to discriminate against an employee. Courts are more hesitant to find discrimination in accent cases. Where the accent interferes with someone being understood sufficiently for a particular job would be obstruction of a legitimate business purpose. An area of further concern is places where employers use tests for English proficiency for hiring, retention or promotion and where those tests go further than is necessary for that position. Most American workers understand the utility of English for employment in this country. Greater employment options are an adequate incentive to learn English, but learning new languages is difficult for adults.

Mr. Igasaki said that his grandparents came here at the turn of the century as young adult and contributed significantly as Americans to our society and economy despite their limited English. Farm laborers, farmers, factory line workers, and restaurateurs can function successfully with very limited English ability. To many, English is more symbolic and is another vestige of the attitude, "I know what's American when I hear it and what you're speaking ain't it."

American employers often knowingly hire undocumented workers. In some cases, they even recruit and bring them to this country in violation of the current immigration law. Our economy relies on this labor and our prices are affected by



the fact that employers of many undocumented workers usually pay very low wages and often don't maintain acceptable work environments. Stories about Thai sweatshop workers held in bondage and Mexican workers with disabilities forced to peddle trinkets on the street are extreme realities and phenomena that we must be vigilant against. But there are other violations of the law that are more frequent than are of equal importance.

Many situations exist when unscrupulous employers know that their workers will not, because of their status, complain of their treatment. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, which created the EEOC and made job discrimination illegal, offers its protections to all workers and applicants, regardless of their immigration status, in employment situations.

Among the areas that the EEOC has had the greatest impact is in the area of sexual harassment. The Supreme Court confirmed EEOC's approach and expects employers to act to prevent and to resolve sexual harassment situations in their workplaces. But one of the areas that have been slowest to change has been workplaces that have large numbers of undocumented workers.

Immigrant workers rarely go to EEOC without some outreach being made to them through institutions that they trust first. Recently, the Supreme Court issued a ruling in the Hoffman Plastics case that narrowed the range of remedies that EEOC can procure for undocumented workers in certain circumstances. The ruling, which covered the NLRB, suggests that undocumented workers cannot receive back pay for work not performed because that would assume that they could have been working legally. At the same time, work that had been completed or the consequential damages of discrimination, such as pain and suffering and costs actually borne, should still be allowed for undocumented workers.

The EEOC does not request immigration documentation from those whom they serve. And EEOC will not investigate immigration status unless if it is directly at issue in a case.

Due to the prejudicial view of who an American should be, especially for Asians and Hispanics, and certainly Arab Americans as well, citizenship will not remove us from the status of being perpetual foreigners. U.S. citizens of Japanese ancestry found that to be the case in 1942. Many Arab Americans feel so today. Secretary of Transportation Norm Mineta, a second-generation American-born citizen, asked the rhetorical question, "How long will it be before we are considered Americans?" Despite incredible public pressure, including some racist and downright threatening pressure from extreme columnist Ann Coulter, Secretary Mineta has continued to resist the approval of racial or ethnic profiling in airport security.

Mr. Igasaki emphasized that we need to get over our reluctance of exercising our rights. Complaining is the American way. Our rights can often be denied and the only way to protect them is to take the risks involved in fighting for them. If there is fear about the impact of the rules of a given governmental institution, have our community organizations approach them and negotiate before unnecessary risks are taken. We have even been able to secure important areas of cooperation with the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) [now separated into two departments: the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the U.S. Bureau of Citizenship and Immigrant Services].

In Chicago, Mayor Harold Washington, its first African American Mayor, produced unprecedented progress for the newest Chicagoans and for the unity of the city as a whole by building a partnership between community organizations and City Hall, including the city's first Immigrant and Refugee Commission. Pressure was brought to bear on the local Immigration service for violating the rights of Hispanic and other immigrant Chicagoans. The first wards represented by Hispanics ultimately became a Congressional district. The first Asian Pacific Americans sat on the School Board and served in the Mayor's cabinet. More minority and multilingual police were hired.

Anything is possible when we share a vision. Our diversity, our many cultures and heritages make us stronger. At our best, we recognize that our laws and protections of due process and equal protection are only as meaningful as they are in the toughest times, protecting the Americans who are the weakest or the least popular at any point in time.

Mr. Igasaki concluded with encouraging the Commission and the Summit participants that with the Commission's leadership, we can and must do better today.

## UPDATE BRIEFING ON INS RULES AND IMMIGRATION ISSUES

### By Isabel Alegria

Senior Policy Analyst

California Immigrant Welfare Collaborative

Ms. Alegria stated that many things changed after 9/11 for both the U.S. immigrants and those wishing to come here as immigrants. In the year before, there was also a series of government initiatives in the area of immigration policy, the Patriot Act for example, that together constitute a tremendous backlash against immigrants, refugees and all the foreign born – the extent and depth of which advocates are still determining.

Ms. Alegria pointed out that long-time legal residents who have worked for years as airport screeners in the Bay Area face losing their jobs because of the unreasonable citizenship requirements of the Patriot Act.

In 2001, administration has made a move to create the cabinet level Department of Homeland Security and to incorporate it into the INS and Executive Office for Immigration Review, as well as other federal agencies. Congress is currently debating this proposal, as well as proposals to split the service and enforcement aspects of the INS into two departments – with many immigrant rights advocates voicing concerns that including immigration functions in the new DHS will cause immigration to be unduly seen as a security issue—and result in even less attention in making sure the INS provides immigration services.

While the anti-terrorism legislation and all the new regulations and policy initiatives are altering the landscape for so many of our immigrant communities, much has remained the same for immigrants post 9/11 in other ways. Immigrant communities everywhere are still feeling the effects of the terrible restrictions on vital safety net benefits imposed by the welfare and immigration laws of 1996 – and advocates have steadfastly fought to restore benefits to immigrants such as health care, food assistance and help to those who are without work and the skills to move into decent paying jobs and better housing.

Here in California, we have made substantial gains in this effort. Through its replacement programs, California stands as the most generous state toward immigrants in the nation. For the poor and working immigrants who have lost federal benefits, there are some federal developments that may help bring needed federal funds to our state.

Specifically there are three federal efforts whose effects would surely be felt in California – 1) the Food stamp restorations in the Farm Bill; 2) a proposal to restore healthcare benefits for children and pregnant women under the reauthorization of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) and 3) a proposal to allow young people without documents to gain lawful status.

### Farm Bill and Food Stamps Restoration

This is the broadest restoration of an immigrant's eligibility for Food Stamps since the 1996 welfare law was enacted. The provisions are contained in the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act or "Farm Bill" which passed the House in April and the Senate in May, 2002.

The bill restores Food Stamp eligibility to three groups of immigrants:

- Qualified immigrants who have lived in qualified status in the United States for at least five years. The administration estimates that this provision which goes into effect on April 1, 2003 will benefit about 363,000 immigrants nationwide currently barred from receiving food stamps.
- Qualified immigrant children, regardless of when they entered the country (now qualified children are exempt from immigrant restrictions only if they were living in the U.S. lawfully on Aug 22, 1996 and are subject to deeming). This provision takes effect Oct. 1, 2003
- Qualified immigrants who are receiving disability-related assistance, regardless of when they entered the U.S. This provision also takes effect Oct. 1 2003.



What will this mean in California where we have a state program, CFAP, which has filled in the gap for many immigrants denied food assistance at the federal level? For one, we receive more federal dollars for food assistance, something we can all appreciate. Our task will be to maintain eligibility for as many immigrants as possible under the federal program while preserving our state's safety net programs.

### **Reauthorization of the TANF program**

Even in this climate of fear and vulnerability for immigrants, the drive to restore public benefits to immigrants took one more step forward when the Senate Finance Committee in June, 2002, voted to include reauthorizing the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program.

The bill (known as the Work, Opportunity and Responsibility for Kids or WORK Act, HR 4737):

- Gives states the option to provide Medicaid and the State Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) to pregnant women and children living lawfully in the country, regardless of when they entered;
- Clarifies that state and local governments may use their own money to provide health services to undocumented immigrants; and
- Gives states the option to provide TANF services such as childcare, transportation subsidies, ESL classes to qualified immigrants regardless of the date they entered the U.S.

The House version of the TANF reauthorization did not restore any benefits to immigrants so we anticipate a need for everyone to make clear to our representatives that we'd like to see the Senate version supported when this goes to conference.

### **The DREAM Act**

This is a bill that has particular importance in California where we have won the passage of AB 540 which granted in-state tuition to immigrant students regardless of immigration status if they met certain requirements.

The Senate Judiciary Committee has passed a bill that would expand some undocumented immigrants' access to educational benefits and their ability to adjust to lawful status. Sponsored by Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-UT), the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act (S. 1291) was passed by the Senate committee on June 20, 2002.

As amended in the committee, the DREAM Act repeals the provision of federal law that discourages states from providing in-state tuition to undocumented immigrants. It also permits long-time resident immigrants with good moral character to obtain lawful permanent resident status once they graduate from high school.

Many of these efforts at the federal level would allow California to combine its own financial support of vital safety net programs with badly needed federal funds. I encourage you to look into these federal proposals and let your elected representatives know of your view.

## IMMIGRANT RIGHTS BILLS MOVE TO THE GOVERNOR'S DESK

### By Jeanette Zanitapin

Senior Policy Analyst

California Immigrant Welfare Collaborative

Ms. Zanitapin explained the following bills that affect immigrants and the ones that need further advocacy to urge the Governor to sign them into law. Updated information on the status and text of these bills can also be found at the Legislative Counsel's Bill Information website at <[www.leginfo.ca.gov/billinfo.html](http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/billinfo.html)>.

The following were the bills discussed by Ms. Zanitapin:

**SB 987 (Escutia)** which ensures proper implementation and enforcement of the Dymally-Alatorre Bilingual Services Act, requiring state agencies that serve limited English proficient clients to develop a plan to address the language needs of the populations they serve.

**AB 1947 (Washington):** CalWORKs & Food Stamps Eligibility which exempts individuals who are enrolled in a drug treatment program under Proposition 36 from the lifetime ban on CalWORKs and food stamps.

**AB 2386 (Keeley):** CalWORKs Time Limits which extends the 18-24 month time limit for CalWORKs participants engaged in education or training programs under specific circumstances.

**SB 59 (Escutia):** Pilot Projects for Homeless and Immigrant Children which requires MRMIB to develop recommendations for innovative health care projects available under the SCHIP 1115 waiver to address the needs of vulnerable populations including immigrant and homeless children.

**SB 1654 (Burton):** Office of Homelessness which establishes the Office of Homelessness within the Governor's office. The Office of Homelessness would collaborate with state agencies to assist with shelter, healthcare, mental health, and emergency housing needs of the homeless population.

**AB 2739 (Chan):** Managed Care Standards which codifies and makes more uniform the cultural and linguistic requirements for health plans that participate in MediCal managed care and the Healthy Families program.

**AB 3035 (Judiciary Committee):** Access to Government Programs which clarifies that programs operated or funded by state agencies are prohibited from discriminating based on race or national origin.

**ACR 229 (Firebaugh & Diaz):** Mexican Matriculas/ Cedula Resolution which urges cities and counties

throughout California, including their respective agencies, to accept the Mexican Consular identification cards, known as the "Matricula Consular," as an official form of identification. Since 9/11 immigrants have been asked to present valid ID upon entering some county and local offices and to the police.

**AJR 57 (Firebaugh & Diaz):** INS & Police Cooperation Resolution which states the state and local law enforcement agencies lack the authority to stop, arrest, or detain persons based on suspected or alleged violations of federal immigration laws.

**AB 60 (Cedillo):** Driver's Licenses which seeks to permit people who do not have a Social Security number to apply for a driver's license.

**SB 804 (Polanco):** which has several restrictive amendments to single out immigrants, including the imposition of criminal background checks for immigrants only and denial of drivers licenses for immigrants with certain convictions, arrests pending adjudication and "wants and warrants".

**AB 116 (Nakano):** APIA Commission which creates a state Asian Pacific Islander American Advisory Commission, similar to the one at the federal level.

**AB 2837 (Koretz):** CalOSHA which requires Cal/ OSHA to provide more bilingual services and would tighten investigative and reporting procedures in cases of workplace deaths.

**SB 1736 (Burton):** Agricultural Workers/ Binding Arbitration which would allow thousands of California's farm workers to use binding arbitration to negotiate contracts with their employers.

**SB 1818 (Romero):** Hoffman Decision which mitigates the adverse impact of the Supreme Court's recent decision in Hoffman Plastic Compounds, Inc. v. NLRB by assessing meaningful penalties against exploitive employers who are found violating the rights of immigrant workers, regardless of immigration status.

## SUMMARY OF THE WORKGROUP DISCUSSIONS

### INTRODUCTION TO THE WORKGROUPS, PANELS AND DISCUSSION NOTES

**By the Honorable Commissioners Dr. Joaquin L. Gonzalez, III and Vera Haile**  
Co-chairs of the Summit Program Committee

#### **Purpose and scope**

At the core of the Summit were the immigrant-focused workgroup discussions. Areas of needs were classified into ten major workgroup areas. Each workgroup has two sessions: the first one in the late morning to identify and prioritize issues, and the second one in the afternoon to strategize the corresponding solutions.

About 300 Summit participants attended one of the ten immigrant-focus workgroups of their choice on topics that spanned the areas of civil rights, economic development, education, health, housing, jobs, language access, naturalization, political participation, and youth and family. Among them, at least 80 were invited participants who served as expert panelists, representing a provider of one or more of these targeted areas from the public or private sectors. Many of the other interested immigrants who attended the Summit were invited by community-based organizations that have worked with them and trusted by them. The demographic profile of workgroup participants included a broad range of age, gender, ethnicity, education, naturalization and employment status.

The panel discussions concluded with a final plenary session featuring summary reports from the ten workgroups.

With the Summit being only a one-day event, the panel participants had to work within a very limited time frame. It was therefore not the intention of the Summit to come up with all the possible issues and solutions in each area, but to initiate a dialogue and to zero in on the most urgent or critical ones that merit serious attention.

This section of the report contains a concise summary of the discussion that took place in the ten workgroup panels. For each panel, the report format adopted includes a purpose, a summarized overview, the main issues identified, their recommended solutions and other pertinent discussion points. It serves to illustrate the complexities and intricacies of some of the problems that immigrants face today.

#### **Methodology**

One to two Commissioners from the San Francisco Immigrant Rights Commission were assigned to each of the ten workgroup to coordinate, assist and observe the process during the panel discussion.

Early on during the planning phase, the Planning Committee recognized that opinions gathered from this Summit were strictly a function of the personal experience and expertise expressed by those present in the workgroup discussions. Therefore, three to six knowledgeable community and government leaders were invited to serve as expert panelists giving information and resources when needed for the many complex issues, processes, laws and other background information during the panel discussion. One moderator was also selected from among these panelists for each workgroup.

To involve student participation, 26 volunteer graduate students, recruited by the Honorable Commissioner Dr. Joaquin L. Gonzalez, III from the University of San Francisco, acted as recorders for the ten panel discussions.

The report editing team produced the following outline summaries of the workgroup discussions based on the reports obtained from the moderators and essays from the students. The final draft of the summaries was sent to the moderators and to the Commissioners for their review to check for any errors and omissions and to add comments.

(The original discussion notes and student essays can be viewed at the Office of the Immigrant Rights Commission upon request.)

SUMMARIES OF THE WORKGROUP DISCUSSIONS

CIVIL RIGHTS

<b>PURPOSE</b>
To discuss the increase of discrimination and racial profiling of immigrants that has taken place since September 11, 2001
<b>COORDINATOR</b>
Commissioner Medea Benjamin
<b>MODERATOR</b>
Maria Archuleta American Civil Liberties Union
<b>PANELISTS</b>
Heba Nimr American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee
Abeer Rafidi Arab Cultural Center
Melinda Moore San Francisco Police Department
Hadas Rivera-Weiss San Francisco Human Rights Commission
<b>REPORTERS</b>
Pebbles Remula Morgan Hamm University of San Francisco

Discussion Overview

Since September 11, 2001, there has been an increase in discrimination and racial profiling of immigrants. Also reported were unfair government policies and practices targeting them. There was also concern regarding the under-reporting of hate crimes.

Participants discussed the need to communicate a clear stand against the Patriot Act and hate crimes. They spoke of the need to educate and encourage and guide them to become assertive advocates for their rights. Such an approach would require collaborative efforts among the community service agencies working with targeted immigrant groups. Some of the specifics discussed include the need to provide assistance to airport screeners, to encourage reporting of hate crimes, and to conduct cultural sensitivity training for the San Francisco Police Department and, the San Francisco Airport employees, in particular.

Identified Top Issues and Recommended Solutions

Airport security and baggage screeners – job displacement

- Provide the San Francisco airport screeners the needed assistance to help them pass the Screener’s test.
- Uphold that the City is one of the five pilot programs that exempts from the national airport security programs, and extend this pilot status beyond the initial 2-year period.

Insufficient monitoring of civil rights with community and government agencies in education, law enforcement

- Affirms City’s stand against the Patriot Act and requests that the FBI inform the City of each instance of wiretapping and monitoring for the investigation of terrorism, religious institutions, political rallies, and political meetings. Two examples that need monitoring were cited: sneak-and-peek searches and requests for library records.

Under-reporting of hate crime

- (The City) to make a clear and strong stand against acts of hate and against federal practices that contribute to acts of hate.
- (The City) to declare itself to be against hate crimes and encourages individuals to report as well as speak against individual acts of hate.
- (The City) to deny access to immigrant information by government agencies other than the INS.
- (The City) recognizes federal attempts to involve unwitting local police in immigration enforcement through the National Crime and Information Center (NCIC) database. The City should be vigilant in making sure that the San Francisco police abides by local law and do not detain an encountered person only on the basis that his name is in the database.

Police's cooperation with the Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)

- Urge the San Francisco Police Chief to issue a written directive to all San Francisco police officers reminding them in simple and clear language that local law prohibits San Francisco police from:
  - providing information to federal immigration enforcement officers, or
  - threatening local residents to report them to the Immigration and Naturalization Service.
- Develop cultural sensitivity in City government workers.
- Provide cultural sensitivity training, especially to law enforcement and workers at the San Francisco International Airport, by the communities most affected by the September 11 terrorist attack and make the employee participation roster available to the public.

#### **Other Related Discussion Points**

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- The issue of airport baggage screeners was felt to be most urgent and thus dominated the discussion of this session. Frustration of the screeners' situation was directed towards the Federal government.
- Recognizing that the City has reaffirmed its status as City and County of Refuge (Resolution 389-02).

SUMMARIES OF THE WORKGROUP DISCUSSIONS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**PURPOSE**

To improve equal access to business, investment and contractual opportunities, as well as to information and services at public and private agencies

**COORDINATOR**

Commissioner  
Joseph Nwadibia

**MODERATOR**

Nick Buick  
Executive Director  
Russian-American Community  
Development Center

**PANELISTS**

Eugene Coleman  
S.F. Mayor's Office of  
Community Development

Brian Gaines  
San Francisco Human  
Services Commission

**REPORTERS**

Emilie Arnaud  
Genevieve Barter  
Angelica Gallardo  
University of San Francisco

**Discussion Overview**

This group addressed barriers keeping immigrants from entering the U.S. workforce to earn a decent living. There are gaps in communication concerning jobs, job training, loan opportunities as well as the application processes. Also, many professional immigrants cannot realize their income potentials due to non-recognition of their foreign credentials or degrees.

Recommended solutions include the need for engagement of the ethnic media to publicize economic opportunities such as jobs and loan programs, distribution of agency publications to targeted groups, more loan programs for immigrants, online access to new and existing economic opportunities and more job training. For immigrants with credentials obtained abroad, the importance of facilitating recognition of the foreign credentials as and of creating an easier accreditation process were also discussed.

**Identified Top Issues and Recommended Solutions**

Breakdown in communication to immigrants about existing programs in economic opportunities

- Increase publicity and promotion of new and existing governmental assistance programs, especially in ethnic newspapers. Encourage editors of ethnic newspapers to devote space to inform people on the economic opportunities.
- Conduct a press release by the Commission of new or existing programs.
- Establish a web-based, user-friendly, electronic clearinghouse to provide job information and access.

Barriers with obtaining business loans – Barriers include citizenship status and job creation requirements (for every \$35, 000 loan), and bad or no credit backgrounds

- Provide assistance to qualify and obtain loans.
- Create ethnic credit unions to assist immigrants.

Barriers with obtaining jobs

- Create an ombudsman or mediator position to work with employers and encourage them not to overlook immigrants.
- Promote federal, state, and local job opportunities and training programs with a focus on the immigrant community, mostly implemented through San Francisco City College.

### Barriers against recognizing foreign degrees and licensures

- Foreign degree recognition program – The accreditation bodies in the United States should establish a relationship with the accreditation associations of other countries to set up standardized qualifications and create international accreditation. It will enable immigrants who had a professional career in their country to have a fair chance of getting the same career in the United States without having to be re-tested and re-trained.

### Other Related Discussion Points

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- The government attempts to help resolve the immigrants' employment problems by providing a resource publication on the listings of organizations, their information and services. However, only an insufficient limited few hundred of these resource books were printed per year. More of these valuable resource guides should be printed and promoted using the immigrant media outreach.
- The main goals of the Mayor's Office of Community Development are to help low-income communities and to fund non-profit organizations. There are three categories of economic development in this office. They are (1) the Micro Enterprise Loan Program; (2) the Regular Loan Program – for small to moderately sized businesses, with loans of \$100, 000 to \$200, 000; and (3) the 108 Loan Program – loaning up to \$25 million to different kinds of businesses, organizations, and programs, such as a childcare program, which can get \$10 million, and a major business, which can get \$5 million. Criteria for obtaining these loans should be revisited and these loans can be promoted more through immigrant media outreach efforts



SUMMARIES OF THE WORKGROUP DISCUSSIONS

EDUCATION

<b>PURPOSE</b>
To improve access to education, rehabilitation and training for better paying, more secure and personally rewarding jobs and to create equality in the school environment
<b>COORDINATOR</b>
Commissioner Marlene Tran
<b>MODERATOR</b>
Eric Mar Board President San Francisco Unified School District
<b>PANELISTS</b>
Frances Lee & Joanna Low City College of San Francisco;  Linda Luevano San Francisco Unified School District
<b>REPORTERS</b>
John Beveridge Emilia Cerrillo Jacqueline Rastrullo University of San Francisco

Discussion Overview

Many immigrants who wish to become educated with respect to new vocational or language skills, or who wish to send their children to public schools face many barriers. The group discussed the lack of sufficient translated materials and bilingual staff at school sites. They also discussed the need for more ESL and vocational programs.

A collaborative approach with the San Francisco Unified School District, San Francisco City College, and the immigrant community was deemed necessary for making positive changes in this area also. Solutions suggested included increasing resources for parents through use of bilingual staff, recruiting translators or student volunteers, establishing a central resource office, and outreach efforts using more language-appropriate information pamphlets and ethnic media reporting.

Identified Top Issues and Recommended Solutions

Insufficient support services

- Establish a resource office for immigrants and immigrant families as a support system with multilingual staff.
- Create a pool of Spanish- and Chinese-speaking staff through the Office of Public Engagements to ensure that translators are available at public events or functions to improve the language access and understanding of school or government programs, goals, issues, and expectations.

Insufficient language access and cultural sensitivity

- Have available pamphlets of information on programs in different languages.
- Create multilingual programs at little or no cost and do community outreach through public service announcements using the San Francisco Unified School District's radio station.
- Recruit college students as interns working with the immigrant community for service credits and experience.
- Encourage newspapers in the Asian and Latino communities to work more closely with schools to impart important school information to their respective communities. Advertise using billboards in various languages by SF City College or the Unified School District can help keep the immigrant community better informed.
- Create equal opportunity in education and school environment.

Other Related Discussion Points

- The panel and participants were all in agreement that collaborative efforts among the San Francisco Unified School District, San Francisco City College, and the immigrant community are needed for making changes.



SUMMARIES OF THE WORKGROUP DISCUSSIONS

HEALTH, AGING AND IMMIGRANT VETERANS

<b>PURPOSE</b>
To discuss special health and social service issues specific to the immigrant community and adequate access to affordable medical care, including those for immigrant veterans
<b>COORDINATOR</b>
Commissioner Diana Lau Chair of the Summit Planning Committee and the SI-IRC
<b>MODERATOR</b>
Darrick Lam San Francisco Department of Aging and Adult Services
<b>PANELISTS</b>
Luisa Antonio Veterans Equity Center
Sabrina Cheng On Lok Senior Health Services
Barbara Garcia San Francisco Department of Public Health
Patricia Irwin San Francisco Department of Public Health
Wanda Jung San Francisco Department of Human Services
Mario Moreno San Francisco Health Plan
<b>REPORTERS</b>
Jerome Tulio Erin Walters Michael Wood University of San Francisco

Discussion Overview

The group discussed the delay, and sometimes reluctance, that many immigrants have in seeking medical treatment. Reasons may include the fear of being reported to the INS (undocumented individuals), inability to navigate the complex network of healthcare systems, lack of healthcare insurance, as well as financial, language and cultural barriers. Low income levels and poor living conditions were identified to be factors directly related to poorer health status and outcomes. A group of Filipino-American veterans present raised issues relating to their retirement benefits and inadequate health services for their medical needs.

Solutions suggested include seeking private sector funding for creating more cultural-sensitive and language-appropriate healthcare programs and informational materials; building a stronger coalition among the community-based organizations, City agencies and commissions to make assessment of health issues and improvement of medical services specific to immigrants; and using report cards for public disclosure of staff participation in cultural sensitivity training. The group also suggested that the “Building a Healthier San Francisco” coalition should include more community members to broaden its membership base. Healthcare access can be improved by having the Health Department extend its hours of operation as well as by conducting cultural-sensitive and language-appropriate health-related awareness campaigns.

Identified Top Issues and Recommended Solutions

- Veteran Immigrants: Inadequate health services and inequity in benefits.
- Accessibility Issues: Lack of affordable long-term care, language barriers, lack of funds and lack of sensitivity and training of healthcare providers toward immigrant issues
- Identify the real barriers – situational vs. non-situational barriers.
  - Identify and allocate more resources (i.e., funding) for immigrant services.
  - Produce a handbook for new immigrants, an Immigrant Survival Guide in different languages.
  - Hold hospitals to standards that include training in cultural sensitivity and language access and create a “Report Card” to provide quarterly update on the progress made.

Public charge: Anti-immigrant sentiment and fear of losing confidentiality – fear of the healthcare agency will turn over information to the INS

- Create a stronger coalition with representation from community-based organizations and city agencies to deal with immigrant issues.

Problems in communication, coordination of home, community-based and long-term care services and inability to navigate through the healthcare system

- Conduct needs assessment in collaboration with other City entities (e.g., Department of Aging and Adult Services, Human Rights Commission) to provide some quantitative basis and recommendations on the best way to access healthcare services.
- Urge “Building a Healthier San Francisco” to expand its membership and include representation from broader constituents.
- Urge the City’s Public Health Centers to accommodate the needs of immigrants and extend their services beyond the regular operation hours of 9 to 5 to evenings and weekends, as well as providing bilingual services.
- Implement a postcard campaign to serve as a marketing tool to remind immigrants to participate in the healthcare system.
- Seek money from private sector or non-profit philanthropy organizations to help fund health programs.
- Conduct ad hoc neighborhood meetings to discuss healthcare issues.

#### **Other Related Discussion Points**

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- Proper housing and sanitary living conditions were recognized as having a direct bearing on the health and well-being of immigrants.

SUMMARIES OF THE WORKGROUP DISCUSSIONS

THE HOUSING AND SHELTER PANEL

**PURPOSE**

To explore adequate access to affordable housing and availability of services that address the homeless issue

**COORDINATOR**

Commissioner Phu Nguyen  
& Tamara Ribas

**MODERATOR**

Daryl Higashi  
S.F. Mayor's Office of Housing

Angela Chu  
Chinatown Community  
Development Center

**PANELISTS**

Julie Lee  
San Francisco Housing  
Commission

Buddy Choy  
San Francisco Housing Authority,  
Civil Rights Office

Trang Tuan  
South East Asia Community  
Center

**REPORTERS**

Steffany Kisling  
Leigh Bulkeley  
University of San Francisco

**Discussion Overview**

The group addressed the issues of the high cost of living in San Francisco, the tight housing market, the need for more housing subsidies, and the substandard living conditions of many low-income immigrants. Also discussed were the language difficulties: the insufficient amount of translated materials, bilingual staff, and outreach through ethnic media. They also identified the need for childcare, healthcare, increased security and other programs within the public housing complexes.

Solutions include the formation of a Public Interest Partnership (PIP). The panel also suggested a conscientious effort to hire more bilingual staff at the Housing Authority and public housing complexes, provide more language-appropriate information and forms, and train existing staff in language and cultural sensitivity. Living conditions could be improved by enforcing housing standards and San Francisco Housing Codes, increasing security and other services in public housing complexes, and incorporating penalties as well as incentives for private apartment landlord to maintain decent living conditions. In order to implement the above suggestions, there is an obvious need to seek more federal and state money for housing subsidies and improvement needs.

**Identified Top Issues and Recommended Solutions**

Inadequate language and information access to housing assistance

- Increase bilingual staff at the San Francisco Housing Authority.
- Produce multilingual publications.
- Seek more federal/state funds for language assistance.

Shortage of affordable housing

- Turn Presidio and Treasure Island into affordable housing sites for low-income immigrants.
- Develop better coalitions with non-profit organizations and private apartment owners and form public interest partnerships (PIPs).

Poor living conditions of the "lower income" and subsidized housing

- Improve private apartment inventory with public funding assistance to improve living situations.
- Set and enforce standards and San Francisco Housing Codes.
- Provide more security in public housing.

- Incorporate penalties as well as incentives for private apartment landlord to maintain proper living conditions.
- Increase rental subsidy.
- Lobby Congress for more money.

#### Lack of services for families and residents

- Develop services such as on-site health care, community centers, tenant education programs (e.g. to teach tenants how to preform minor repairs around the home by themselves).
- Provide workshops or after school programs to keep kids out of trouble.
- Increase the numbers of inspectors and security personnel for public housing.
- Assist tenants in developing neighborhood watchdog groups.

#### Other Related Discussion Points

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- Funding is a key issue to finance most of the proposed solutions to alleviate the housing issues and problems.
- Establishment of a public interest partnership (PIP) among the government establishment, business and community is a viable solution that can help solve some of the issues and problems.

SUMMARIES OF THE WORKGROUP DISCUSSIONS

JOBS AND EMPLOYMENT

<b>PURPOSE</b>
To discuss equal access to work permits and protection under fair labor practices, including social security and other employment areas
<b>COORDINATOR</b>
Commissioner Isabel Huie Vice Chair of SF-IRC (6/2001–12/2003)
<b>MODERATOR</b>
Gordon Mar Chinese Progressive Association
<b>PANELISTS</b>
Joannie Chang Asian Law Caucus
Henry K.W. Lau Self Help for the Elderly
Ed Lew San Francisco Department of Human Services
Warren Mar UC Berkeley Center for Labor Research
Lucila Rosas Equal Opportunity Commission
Renee Saucedo San Francisco Day Labor Program
<b>REPORTERS</b>
Michiko Thompson Neoma Chefalo Ingrid Prado University of San Francisco

Discussion Overview

The joblessness rate is at an all-time high with many immigrants unemployed due to company cutbacks. So issues discussed revolved around joblessness, lack of language and vocational skills and unfair employment situations. The group also discussed inadequate job training and access and the glass ceiling effect. Quite a few immigrants, especially those with limited English proficiencies, work in low-paying jobs with harsh, substandard, and sometimes unsafe work conditions. Despite the poor work conditions and job inequalities, there was great concern that many were afraid to speak out for fear of repercussions from their employers as well as the INS. The group felt that there was a general lack of knowledge of labor laws from both the employer and the employee sides.

Solutions suggested include securing more resources to create jobs and training programs for new vocational skills. The need for more education on employment laws, increasing English proficiency, and advocacy on workers' rights were also discussed. The City government could help by enforcing labor laws, especially in work related to city-funded contracts, and to make timely adjustment to the living wage laws.

Identified Top Issues and Recommended Solutions

Workforce Development and Training

- Use education as a tool to teach advocacy and empowerment of employment rights as well as upward mobility of the workforce.

Lack of Knowledge on Workers' Rights

This area included discrimination, exploitation, wage labor laws, cultural challenges, employer education and the "glass ceiling" effect.

- Educate employers against exploitation of workers.
- Ensure that contractors with City contracts adhere to labor laws.
- Expand current living wage laws.
- Prosecute employers who disregard labor laws and living wage laws.
- Expand and monitor adherence to the CAL-OSHA standards to ensure the safety of immigrant employees.
- Unionize the bottom of the spectrum employees.
- Present these issues to government officials and other non-civil entities that can provide tangible results and active enforcement.
- Identify the "glass ceiling" effect as a type of job discrimination.

### Job training and access

Discussion included the Hoffman Decision, San Francisco Airport screeners, migrant workers, and day laborers.

- Establish a city-sponsored day labor program as an inclusive method for centralizing immigrant employees in the hiring process.
- Change legislation and established community practices to address structural inconsistencies regarding hiring procedures.

### Cultural/language barriers

- Expand ESL and vocational training classes.
- Allocate more funding through community-based organizations to require employers to provide programs about employment laws.
- Increase access to these resources by providing translated materials and using multilingual personnel.

### **Other Related Discussion Points**

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- This panel has identified a multitude of complex employment issues and the need for partnership between government and society to address these issues.
- An overall sentiment is that employment laws are not enforced and immigrants are afraid to speak out.
- The Hoffman decision, which upholds that undocumented immigrants do not have the same rights as U.S. citizens to collect back pay from wrongful terminations, is extremely detrimental to forward movements promoting immigrant workers' rights.

SUMMARIES OF THE WORKGROUP DISCUSSIONS

LANGUAGE ACCESS

<b>PURPOSE</b>
To ensure reasonable language access for non-English speaking immigrants at all public and private service venues
<b>COORDINATOR</b>
Commissioner Emi Gusukuma
<b>MODERATOR</b>
Magaly Fernandez Civil Rights/EEO Officer San Francisco Department of Human Resources
<b>PANELISTS</b>
Ashirvadam Rayikanti African Immigrant Refugee Resource Center
Virginia Leya Department of Health Services
Kerry Dalrymple 911 Emergency Communications Department
Norm Nickens Department of Public Health
Joshua Jennings San Francisco Department of Aging and Adult Services
Ashirvadam Rayikanti African Immigrant and Refugee Resource Center
<b>REPORTERS</b>
Caitlin Daly Summer Ezzat Carlos Menchaca University of San Francisco

Discussion Overview

As obvious from the previous discussions, language barriers can exert a tremendous negative impact on the immigrants' lives in more ways than one, directly hindering the immigrants' equal access to many City as well as private sector services that can potentially improve their quality of life. This group felt that more related research is needed to identify specific gaps in services as a result of insufficient bilingual staff, translation services and publications.

Due to the serious impacts that can arise as a result of the language issues, the City has adopted the Equal Access to Services Ordinance in June 2000, mandating translation services in appropriate languages in the 16 major City departments serving the public (also called Tier 1 Departments). But that was only a good beginning. Subsequently, the group has also identified this language access requirement as being necessary in all City departments and public service sectors, especially in public transportation and hospital services. In addition to encouraging immigrants to learn English, other suggestions to combat this difficult issue include the following: establishing an Immigrants' Central Information Office as a one-stop shop for translation services and other assistance, educating existing customer service staff in language and cultural sensitivity, and using bilingual college students as volunteer translators where possible.

Identified Top Issues and Recommended Solutions

Insufficient qualified language interpreters in key service areas

- Need effective interpreters for health and medical issues in public health agencies.
- Provide training for all interpreters in cultural competency.

Lack of business information in phone service in multi languages

- Need a 24/7 multi-lingual hotline in addition to multi language brochures for public services such as MUNI.
- Need multi language recordings in phone messages that serve the public.

Lack of business information in printed handouts in multi languages

- Create an Immigrants' Central Information Office where all immigrants would be able to pick up literature in a variety of languages regarding everything the government, businesses, and civil society offer, and to complement the information service with staff/student volunteers who can answer hotlines as well as questions from immigrant office visitors.
- Share common information among similar business to deflate costs.

Lack of data regarding needs of the community at-large

- Need to identify the specific language needs of the community in order that appropriate resources can be sought to provide adequate services.

Encouraging and helping immigrants to learn English

- Utilize bilingual college students to assist in teaching immigrants English and to help them assimilate to the new country.
- Consider using the consulate of each country, if an immigration center is not possible, as a primary contact source for immigrants to get assistance in their own language.

### **Other Related Discussion Points**

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- While helping to provide information to the monolingual immigrants from a service standpoint, it is also important to recognize the difficulty in learning a new language and therefore the need to help them learn common-day English to enable them assimilate faster in a new country.
- Recognize bilingual college students as a good source of volunteers to provide language training and other needed assistance to immigrants. A system can be set up where these student helpers can get credits in return for their volunteer work.



*Mayor Willie L. Brown and Our Future Leaders*



SUMMARIES OF THE WORKGROUP DISCUSSIONS

NATURALIZATION

<b>PURPOSE</b>
To discuss the current state of naturalization assistance for U.S. entry, political asylum, legal counsel, legal protection and to ensure a due process and upholding the City of Refuge resolution
<b>COORDINATOR</b>
Commissioner Joaquin J. Gonzalez III
<b>MODERATOR</b>
Attorney Eugene Wong, Esq. Immigration Attorney
<b>PANELISTS</b>
Juan Cardona Central American Resource Center
Marta Donayre Love Sees No Borders
Sam Dutch Cambodian Community Development
Leslie Bulbuk LGIRTF-San Francisco chapter
Rachelle Nwadiibia Immigration Attorney
Rosemary Fan U.S Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS)
<b>REPORTERS</b>
Sunny Angulo Jessica Gunderson Juan Garcia University of San Francisco

Discussion Overview

The group felt that the general lack knowledge of INS functioning has contributed to many unnecessary misconceptions and fears within the immigrant community. To make things worse, escalating fees for the application for naturalization in recent years have caused financial hardships in many immigrants.

In this liberal city that houses one of the largest lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender population in the nation, a near crisis state was reached due to the inability to renew their foreign partners' legal visitor status, especially since the September 11 event. This, in coupling with their lack of legal marital status which disqualifies them from naturalization through marriage, has forced many of them to either leave the country or stay illegally without the proper documentation papers, thus decrease their ability to seek work.

Solutions suggested here include the need for more citizenship classes and education workshops to educate immigrants on INS functioning and to dispel unfounded fears, loan programs to assist with the high INS application fees, and more legal counseling and resources regarding the unique domestic partnership issues.

Identified Top Issues and Recommended Solutions

Lack of understanding of the role of INS and immigration proceedings

- Use educational forums to close the information gap between immigrants and the INS.
- Establish clinics/workshops to educate administrators regarding scholastic financial matters – grants and scholarships – as they relate to immigration status.
- Propose to set up a city-administered loan program to assist immigrants with the financial burden of INS form fees.

Underlying fears

- Use ethnic media or public forums to dispel unfounded fears.
- Clarify implications of San Francisco being the "City of Refuge" – encourage refugees as well as immigrants to seek help from police and other city officials.

Domestic partnership immigration rights

- Need legal alternatives and further discussion.

Other Related Discussion Points

- There is evidence of the immigrant community's fear and resultant detachment from government in immigration matters. This can be overcome by education, and by private and civil groups collaborating with INS to create a more harmonious working situation.

SUMMARIES OF THE WORKGROUP DISCUSSIONS

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

PURPOSE

To discuss ways to engage immigrants in full civic and citizenry participation in the political process

COORDINATOR

Commissioners  
Vera Haile &  
Houston Zheng

MODERATOR

Laura Efurd  
Executive Director, California  
Technology Foundation

PANELISTS

Elsa Cheung  
San Francisco Republican Party

Traci Dobronravova  
Self Help for the Elderly

Soluleiman Gholi  
Islamic Society of San Francisco

Jane Morrison  
San Francisco Democratic Party

Harriet Ishimoto  
Office of Congresswoman  
Nancy Pelosi

Polly Kaiser  
Office of Senator Dianne Feinstein

Larisa Casillas  
Green Party of San Francisco

REPORTERS

Natalie Frank  
Sara Suman  
University of San Francisco

Discussion Overview

This group felt that many immigrants do not have a good grasp of structure and functioning of the American political processes and government systems. And historically, the Asian Pacific Americans (APAs) is the ethnic group that has the lowest voter turnout. Many immigrants are not clear about their obligation and voting rights as U.S. citizens, resulting in political apathy and low voter registration and turnout.

Participants discussed about the need for more advocates to speak up on behalf of the immigrant groups, which could be accomplished by cultivating more leadership from within the group. Language-appropriate classes and handouts such as government resource guides, tours, meetings, etc., can help immigrants acculturate to the U.S. society faster and learn about their own rights. The ethnic media, again, shoulders an important role in imparting critical information and education to the immigrants in their own languages. College student volunteers were again identified as a good potential manpower source to teach some immigrant classes for college credit.

Identified Top Issues and Recommended Solutions

Lack of understanding the political process

- Produce a resource guide on the different types of organizations and programs involved in increasing political participation of immigrants.



Political Participation Panel with Commissioner Vera Haile (right)

Lack of understanding of what the government can do and difficulties accessing the government

- Set up tours to local government offices/meetings for immigrant groups and organizations to provide some experience and education of the political system.
- Increase activities such as townhall meetings, to bring elected officials to communities they serve.

Inadequate community resources

- Improve capacity among community-based organization to educate, and to mobilize immigrant populations to advocate for issues of social change as well as issues of concern.

Inadequate opportunities to develop leadership potential

- Increase internship opportunity for immigrant students and other young people to implement a project teaching political and government processes for immigrants.

Financial hardships in application of citizenship

- Lower immigration fees for naturalization.
- Establish loan program for fees

Low voter registration and turnout

- Organize language-appropriate education forums and printed materials around ballot initiatives on issues affecting immigrants in different languages.
- Invite candidates to speak about their positions on issues of specific concern in the immigrant community.
- Encourage community-based organizations to work in partnership with the government to promote voter registration and reach out to immigrants.
- Promote and explain use of absentee ballots to immigrants.

Other Related Discussion Points

- Recognize that immigrants form a diverse group with specific concerns.
- Recognize that policies such as the Patriot Act may be an exaggerated act in response to the 9/11 terrorists attack.
- Recognize that language access and lack of citizenship status are both barriers to political participation

SUMMARIES OF THE WORKGROUP DISCUSSIONS

YOUTH AND FAMILY

<b>PURPOSE</b>
Access to support services with a focus on youth and family. Issues include adaptation to the social and cultural environment as well as juvenile and parenting concerns.
<b>COORDINATOR</b>
Commissioners Hugh Wang & Juan Berumen
<b>MODERATOR</b>
Cedric Yap San Francisco Department of Children, Youth and Families
<b>PANELISTS</b>
Supervisor Chris Daly
Javier Antezana & Marisa Guardado Program Coordinator of the Mission Neighborhood Center's Second Chance Tattoo project
Linda Asato Wu Yee
Doreen Der-McLeod Executive Director of Cameron House
Mai-Mai Ho Executive Director of Asian Perinatal Advocates
Edwin Jocson West-Bay Filipino Multi-Services
Sonia Szejnklaper Social Worker of Jewish Children and Family Services, Émigré Services Program
<b>REPORTERS</b>
Marsela Gilbert Jay Lin University of San Francisco

<b>Discussion Overview</b>
Issues discussed in this section included the various needs of the basic family unit, and the need to support and expand community-based agencies that serve immigrant youth and families, and seek more government as well as private funding. Communication, language and cultural barriers re-surfaced as key areas of concern.
In general, it was felt that a collaborative effort between the government and the community-based organizations can best serve the immigrants in this area also. Neighborhood meetings were mentioned as one of the means of reaching out to the immigrant families and youths. Childcare services, counseling and education were highlighted as areas needing dire support and require prioritized funding.
<b>Identified Top Issues and Recommended Solutions</b>
Increase city resources and collaboration with community-based organizations (CBOs) to better serve our immigrant families and youth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Educate all levels of government about the importance of community collaboration and the work that they do in an attempt to increase funding, support and collaborative efforts.</li><li>• Conduct neighborhood focused, stakeholder summits.</li><li>• Conduct more "Speak up for Kids" Day type programs around immigrant and family youth issues.</li><li>• Increase affordable childcare services.</li><li>• Better counseling outreach/education to immigrant families.</li><li>• Re-prioritize to increase funding for immigrant family and youth needs.</li></ul>
Increase language capacity at every level (from individual immigrants to city government) and ensure adequate level of resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase funding to City College to target and partner with community-based organizations to effectively reach out to their targeted population.</li><li>• Have city-wide translation services (written and oral) for city and city-funded agencies.</li><li>• Educate service providers who work with immigrant communities to be culturally and linguistically competent so they can help immigrants to navigate the system in best ways possible.</li></ul>

- Increase community involvement and civic participation of our immigrant families.
- Support increased CBO capacity (resources and organizational development assistance), especially to fledging agencies.
- Support peer mentoring by sister organizations.
- Support family resource centers and increase their capacities to support all immigrant families and youth.
- Increase use of community-based organizations to conduct multi-cultural or cross-cultural training.
- Create language specific resource guides to recently arrived immigrants teaching them how to navigate the American system.

#### **Other Related Discussion Points**

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None.



*Youth and Family Workgroup Discussion with Supervisor Chris Daly (far left)*



## ANALYSIS OF THE WORKSHOP DISCUSSIONS

### OBSERVATION OF TRENDS, PATTERNS AND EXCEPTIONAL CHARACTERISTICS IN THE DATA

#### By The Honorable Commissioner Diana Lau

Chair, San Francisco Immigrant Rights Commission

Executive Chair of the 2002 Summit Planning Committee

Many of the issues discussed in the workgroups are inter-dependent and have a cause-and-effect relationship with each other. Recognizing these complexities is important to develop an accurate perception of the immigrant community in relation to the community at-large. There are also several salient recurring themes that have resoundingly similar solutions even though they come from different areas of concern.

In all, eight key observations were found to resonate in the keynote speeches and the workgroup discussions:

1. Collaboration of private service providers and government agencies is important.
2. Central leadership in the coordination and integration of the suggested solutions is needed.
3. The general public's biased image of immigrants that they are foreigners – the “them” versus “us” mentality – needs to be changed.
4. Cultural sensitivity and language access, the core issues of many concerns, need to be improved.
5. Profound reluctance to come forward with issues leads to under-reporting and trivialization of problems.
6. Existing service gaps for immigrants need to be closed.
7. Information learned from the Summit can help to set funding priorities.
8. Ethnic media plays a crucial role in immigrants' lives.

#### 1. Collaboration Between Private and Public Sectors

The collaborations suggested are not new undertakings; we recognize that there are numerous collaborations amongst the community-based organizations (CBOs) and government agencies already in place. However, the necessity of more deliberative efforts to support these existing organizations in their collaborative efforts, or develop new ones, were mentioned in different workgroups.

The features and possible benefits unique to a collaborative approach include, but are not limited to, the following:

- formation of a larger referral network
- enabling greater access to services
- increasing information exchange and brainstorming opportunities
- increasing program efficiency through sharing and educating each on the evaluation process and quality improvement cycles
- enabling funders to allocate more funds and resources for strong management teams and programs developed through sharing expertise with each other

#### 2. Centralized Leadership

During the Summation of Findings session, participants identified a need for central leadership to continue the work mentioned in the workgroups. It was suggested that the San Francisco Immigrant Rights Commission was in a strategic position to coordinate further work. The Commission, with 4 of its 15 members being selected by the Mayor and 11 by the Board of Supervisors, can be in an influential position to make recommendations to both the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors on behalf of the community-based organizations, thereby serving as an important link between the private and the public sectors both in the information exchange and in obtaining support. The working logistics of the

Commission at present, however, is difficult to support such functions. At this time, other than the 15 honorary commissioner positions, the Commission only has 1.5 full-time staff working to support all its functions and does not have its own budget. Hence, the Commission has to make an internal assessment and decide what resources it will need and how to secure the resources in order to serve in this central coordination role.

### 3. Altering the Biased Public Image of Immigrants

The root cause of many problems such as hate crimes, job and accent discrimination and prejudices, arises as a result of the friction created when the community-at-large views immigrants as foreigners regardless of their citizenship status. As Mr. Igasaki has pointed out, the fact that immigrants look and speak differently separates them from the norm and makes them easy targets for scapegoating. These antagonistic attitudes and anti-immigrant atmosphere have worsened under the shadows of the Iraqi war, SARS, 9/11 and the Patriot Act. When social acceptance of immigrants becomes a problem, it leads to more discrimination issues and racially-related crimes, and the already limited resources are unnecessarily drained to mitigate the negative effects of these issues. On the other hand, when the general community is able to change their attitudes towards immigrants and treat them as a genuine and equal part of the community, then more of the limited resources can then be re-directed for the necessary services for the immigrants instead.

This Summit called attention to funding agencies regarding the insufficient and disproportionately low funding levels for immigrant services, and emphasized that the community needs to recognize and accept immigrant issues as everybody's issues, and not to treat them as isolated or insignificant concerns from small, unrelated groups.

Changing the public's perception of immigrants' tarnished image is an area where media, especially mainstream media, can influence public opinion. Not only does the media have an obligation in the accurate and unbiased reporting of the the relevant immigrant issues, they also can help to set the gauge for genuine concern and living in harmony in this high-density city, where the lives of immigrants and non-immigrants are intricately interwoven by necessity, as most of us, if not immigrants ourselves, are related to immigrants in some ways.

### 4. Improving Cultural Sensitivity and Language Access

Issues of cultural sensitivity and language access cut across all ten workgroup areas, suggesting the immense magnitude of existing communication problems between service providers and immigrants. Cultural and language barriers lead to inaccessibility. Inaccessibility leads to non-usage of services, and non-usage leads to further escalation of problem areas for immigrants and program inefficiency for organizations. Thus, the already limited potential assistance and opportunities for better living that could otherwise be available to benefit immigrants cannot be utilized by the very people for whom those programs were designed and intended for.

The above finding is hardly surprising. A report on a survey conducted by the California New Media also found that while there is a California civil rights law in 1964 that guarantees Californians their rights to an interpreter when receiving medical assistance, yet most immigrants do not know about it. Many of them are also not aware of the Dymally-Alatorre Bilingual Services Act which requires state agencies that serve limited English-proficient clients to develop a plan to address the language needs of the populations they serve. Ignorance of these regulation leads to non-compliance and defeats the original purpose that establishes them.

San Francisco does have a unique Equal Access to Services (EAS) Ordinance, established on June 15, 2001, which was a big step in the right direction (See Appendix D, page 75) when properly executed, monitored and enforced. It was the City's attempt to increase service and language accessibility by requiring the 16 major City public service departments to offer cultural and language-appropriate materials and staff. Actually, a few major City departments already had important information and communication available in multiple languages even before the institution of the EAS Ordinance. The EAS Ordinance, however, has helped to highlight the need and widen the availability of multilingual information within all the major City governments. Our Commission has been charged with the responsibility to oversee its compliance. When properly executed, it will improve immigrants' access to City services and hopefully can also serve as a catalyst for the private business sector to adopt the language access ordinance on their own, as it only makes good business sense to offer services in customers' own language.

While the ultimate responsibility to learn a new language rests with immigrants themselves, the reality is that there is great hardship in learning a new language, especially with the older, less-educated immigrants. So it is crucial that



communication with the monolingual immigrants be carried out in a language that they can understand.

Ways that can help in this area also include offering English as a Second Language (ESL) programs at more convenient locations and during off-work hours, as well as enlisting the assistance of the ethnic media to provide information in their own languages to bridge the information gaps. Language and cultural training for staff, hiring of more bicultural and bilingual staff in client-service type work areas, and having information and resource listings printed in immigrants' languages can also help. A central information venue was suggested as a viable way of offering a one-stop information service for the immigrants, but this might be difficult to implement during the current budgetary crisis.

And, the ethnic media again plays an important role in educating the public regarding their language rights.

## 5. Trivialization of Problems

Partly fear, partly cultural, partly psychological and partly due to the lack of knowledge and language fluency, many immigrants are afraid to come forward and speak about crimes that have afflicted them or problems that they have encountered. Deeply imbedded within many of them are the real, underlying fears of becoming victims of deportation, discrimination, and/or further hate crime violence. So rather than upholding their rights, they prefer to stay quiet, be unseen and unheard.

Based on this type of underlying knowledge, when the Commission gets to hear issues brought up by the few who spoke at our Commission meetings during public hearings, we often get suspicious that the incidences of hardship and discrimination are actually much more rampant, and that we are only seeing the tip of the iceberg in those who were brave enough to come forward. San Francisco's declaration as a City of Refuge is one of the important step to deal with these issues. It establishes the importance of refugees and immigrants in the legislative forefront with policies that protect and enhance their rights. The group discussed that public servants should be cognizant at all times not to abuse their job authority, and learn to treat their clients, including those who do not speak English well, with equal and due respect through regular training on immigrant rights and cultural sensitivity.

## 6. Closing Existing Service Gaps

Shortage of program funds causes gaps in services in childcare, physical and mental health, education, employment counseling, job placement and training, housing assistance and so on. Many of these service gaps have a cause-and-effect relationship with each other, so that when one service becomes inadequate, problems can grow and snowball into the other areas. Thus, filling in service gaps and coordinating these services are critically important in order to provide effective assistance and communication, streamline operations and maximize the already strained resources for immigrants. It is really crucial that we protect the existing CBOs and cherish their work, as they are the very agencies that provide the bulk of services to immigrants.

## 7. Setting Funding Priorities

In all ten workgroups, the recommended solutions pinpointed or implied the need for additional funds and support to build, sustain, and/or enhance existing programs that service immigrants.

Policy changes that negatively impact immigrants, along with an increase in adversarial attitudes and hate crimes, have presented specific challenges to immigrants. While there were plenty of case examples clearly illustrating the need for remedial services, often times the needed funding was not there, and therefore services could not be provided and needs could not be met. As a matter of fact, ever since the economic downturn, funds have become so limited that some of the existing service programs had to be discontinued due to funding shortfalls. The shortages in public and private funds present a constant threat to many CBOs' survival. The Commission is very concerned about program cutting and budget decisions that might be disproportionately affecting immigrants and further compromise their services.

Several major immigrant service organizations had come before the Commission to request our support to not have their funding levels drastically reduced due to the City's budget crisis. The Commission has been, in most cases, sympathetic to their plight and wrote supportive resolutions. But in general, many, if not most, of the community-based organizations are simply struggling for survival, and the extra efforts that they have to put forth in order to stay solvent further compromise their ability to provide service to the immigrants.

So we hope that information from this Summit will be beneficial to funding agencies that support immigrant service programs to help determine where the funding dollars should go to maximize the benefits to the immigrant community.

#### 8. Ethnic Media's Crucial Role

The ethnic media plays a crucial role not just in disseminating information, but also in educating and influencing immigrants' lives in ways that are culturally-acceptable.

A Wall Street Journal article quoted a ethnic media survey conducted by the New California Media as the "first comprehensive effort to quantify ethnic-media usage in California." Of the 2,000 interviews conducted between November 2001 to March 2002 in a public opinion survey, all of the participants identified themselves as ethnic minorities (1000 Asian, 500 Hispanic, and 500 African-American Californians). 84% of them claimed that they got information through ethnic media (television, radio and newspapers), while 68% preferred ethnic television stations for watching news, and 40% claimed that they paid more attention to ads in their own language than the English ones.

This same survey also found that respondents trust the ethnic media, as opposed to the English language media, as their primary source of information. Foreign language media is found to be a prime source of medical information for California immigrants. Hispanics and Chinese utilize ethnic media the most, and television is the most popular medium followed by newspapers, the Internet and the radio.

These information supports what we have always known about the strong influence of the ethnic media to the immigrant community in more quantifiable terms. The ethnic media's influence will only become stronger as the immigrant community gets bigger, but the main stream media also plays an important role, especially in San Francisco where the ethnic minority is actually the majority in the City.

#### Remarks

The above discussion, while not new to most readers of this report, serves to give coherence to the information and highlights key areas, thereby giving a more meaningful perspective to the immigrant issues. Looking at the immensity of these issues on hand, only sincerity, compassion, determination, dedication, coordination and vigilance can help to mitigate their adverse impact on the immigrants.

Through working together, we can achieve a lot more as a cohesive group than individually alone. Hence, the San Francisco Immigrant Rights Commission remains committed to stay "in partnership today" with the rest of the community in order to achieve "a better tomorrow" for the immigrant community.

## RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE

### INTRODUCTION TO THE 2002 SF-IRC COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS

#### **By the Honorable Commissioner Isabel Huie**

Chair of the 2002 SF-IRC Community Service Awards Committee

San Francisco is blessed not only by the rich cultural diversity that immigrants contribute, but also by the many excellent community-based organizations that serve the immigrant community. Since 2001, the Commission has started giving out Community Service Awards to recognize selective community-based organizations distinguished by their outstanding level of excellence demonstrated in the services that they provide to our City's immigrant community over the past year. In celebration of its 4th-Year Anniversary, the San Francisco Immigrant Rights Commission again presented its Annual Community Service Awards of 2002, this time highlighted as part of the Summit proceedings. Through the diligence and careful consideration of the Awards Nomination Committee, some outstanding candidates were identified and recommended for recognition.

It was a difficult decision-making process as there were many more outstanding organizations that deserve the honor and recognition than the limited number of awards that could be given out. So, after much deliberation, the Commission finally decided to award organizations based on the following three criteria:

- It is an organization that serves in one of the following seven major ethnic/cultural groups in the City: the African Americans, Middle Easterners, Hispanics, Jewish, Philippino, Chinese, and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender community.
- Only one organization per ethnic/cultural group above would be awarded.
- The organization has made a significant contribution to the immigrants that it serves within the last 12 months prior to the date of the Summit

### PROFILES OF THE 2002 SF-IRC AWARD HONOREES

#### **By the Honorable Commissioners Isabel Huie and Vera Haile**

The 2002 SF-IRC Community Service Awards Committee

In presenting the awards to the organizations described below, the Immigrant Rights Commission of the City and County of San Francisco proudly recognized them for their notable achievements and applauded their humanitarian efforts in upholding immigrant rights in action and making San Francisco a welcoming home for immigrants

The awardees were:

The African Immigrant & Refugee Resource Center for their outstanding services to the refugees and immigrants from many of the countries in Africa including Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Somalia, Nigeria, and others. As the only agency in the city focusing of the needs of immigrants from this continent, they assist new immigrants with finding the resources they need and provide the much needed assistance with legal, immigration, and naturalization problems.

The Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee for their outstanding services during the crises immediately following the terrorist attack on September 11, 2001. The ADCSF is a community-based group serving the Arab immigrant and Arab American communities through education, advocacy and empowerment programs. They established a 24-hour Community Resources Hot Line in Arabic and English that provides support and resources for victims of hate crimes, harassment and discrimination in its many forms. Referral is made to culturally appropriate direct service organizations for many kinds of assistance. ADCSF is engaged in expansive outreach and education to their constituencies as well as the general public through public forums and workshops. Other programs include media advocacy and leadership development.

CARECEN [Central American Resource Center] for providing outstanding services to immigrants from Central America. They assisted 3,000 immigrants obtain work permits to work legally in the United States, provided other legal, immigration and naturalization services and help the community keep informed about changes in immigration law. Over 600 families were provided case management and information and referral for problems. Their Second Chance Tattoo Removal program and Annual SF-IRC Community Service Awards case management helped young people change their lives. Out of concern for family members in El Salvador, CARECEN also helped raise funds for the earthquake victims in their home country.

Émigré Services Program of Jewish Family and Children's Services for their outstanding services to 1,100 to 1,200 immigrants from the former Soviet Union each year. The range of their services is exceptional: beginning with resettlement assistance and helping people find housing when they first arrive to arrangements for job training and placement, providing ESL classes as well as mental health counseling, and helping immigrants find health care to providing legal services, citizenship preparation and applications, and voter education and registration. Their services span all ages from children and youth to adults and seniors, including the frail and disabled.

The Filipino Airport Screeners and Union Local 790 (including organizer Das Lambaras) for their successful advocacy effort to obtain a one-year exemption as a pilot program for the Filipino workers. Without their advocacy, up to 80% of the screeners would have lost their jobs with the federalization of program, because most of the airport screeners are not citizens. With the exemption the screeners can keep their jobs for at least one more year, and the San Francisco airport can continue to benefit from their skill and many years of experience.

Housing Services of Asian Law Caucus for outstanding service in protecting the housing rights of immigrant tenants and preserving safe and affordable housing. In public housings where Asians have suffered violence and discrimination, ALC helped the immigrant tenants to obtain transfers to safer housing projects or helped to see that adequate security was provided. Within the private housing sector in Chinatown, where groups of tenants were being evicted from their affordable housing, ALC assured that their rights were protected and not summarily evicted. Dazzled by the complexity of housing laws, immigrants have been helped by ALC to understand their tenant rights. As a result, many immigrants have been able to maintain their housing and find increased security and safety in their living arrangements.

Love Sees No Borders and the National Gay and Lesbian Civil Rights Organization for their advocacy on behalf of domestic partners from other countries. They have worked tirelessly to obtain the right for gays and lesbians to sponsor their domestic partners who are citizens of other countries to legally remain in the U.S. Despite the uphill battle, they have been successful in advocating for their cause and developing support on the local and national level in the hope of changing immigration law.

## NEXT STEPS AND CONCLUSION

### THE CALL FOR AN INTEGRATED SOLUTION

#### **By The Honorable Commissioner Diana Lau**

Chair, San Francisco Immigrant Rights Commission

Executive Chair, 2002 Summit Planning Committee

The Summit, while successfully concluded for the day, gave birth to a new beginning and pointed to more important work that still awaits to be done. Many issues were discussed during the Summit, and many more corresponding solutions were suggested. We knew that these suggestions were important at the time of the Summit in Sept. 2002, but now, months later, with the onslaught and aftermath of the Iraqi war and the onset of SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome), things actually have gone from bad to worse, and what was considered to be necessary then have become even more critical for the immigrant community now.

Many of the services for the immigrant community are carried out by the community-based organizations (CBOs) in San Francisco. Therefore, the support and grooming of these CBOs are of vital importance for the immigrant community. Many CBOs rely on public as well as private fundings for their operations and programs, as the immigrant population that they serve often cannot afford the service fees on their own. Unfortunately, the dwindling of the available public as well as private funds is reaching a crisis level and threatens many CBO's survival.

For the CBOs to apply for grants from funders, it is of course important that their projects are significant, but from many funders perspective, it is even more important that they are convinced that their money will be utilized efficiently and effectively in addition to meaningfully. Some funders have expressed that they would rather fund a B project executed by an A team than an A project executed by a B team. Therefore, CBOs working with immigrants must develop organizational effectiveness and program efficiency, as that will increase their credibility with the funders and therefore their opportunity for funding. Increasing visibility of their programs through effective marketing and outreach are all important aspects that can increase program accessibility and success.

The process of working with the immigrant community is similar to working with any other major projects. First, there should be the assessment, then problems are identified and defined, from there action steps are designed, implemented, and the results are evaluated. Quality improvement (QI) data are important information to be collected throughout the process, and this QI process needs to be designed upfront at the beginning of any high quality project. The mentality towards these QI data also needs to expand from their regular use in program reporting to become a valuable tool in performance improvement.

Thus we urge CBOs to keep up their good work and excel in their performance, assess and modify their internal operations wherever necessary to maximize their organizational effectiveness, increase the visibility of their programs and outreach aggressively to the immigrant community that they serve. Hopefully, the CBOs can obtain the funding support, sustain their operations and solvency and work in collaboration with each other to efficiently deliver the much needed services for the immigrant community.

We urge funders to assist CBOs in their efforts to become better organizations, offer program improvement suggestions and skills building opportunities, and ultimately, give funding to the many well-deserved ones in support of their many important service programs for the immigrants. Very few of the suggestions from the Summit can be implemented without the active participation of the CBOs, and that speaks about the importance of their existence and services for San Francisco's immigrant community.

The Commission will discuss other ways to follow up with the suggestions in this report and to assess its role and available resources to serve as a centralized body to oversee the implementation and to evaluate the outcome of the suggested solutions. In the mean time, it is working diligently with the CBOs as a community partner to increase their visibility by publicly recognizing their good work and participating as co-sponsors for significant community events.

We need

**FUNDING, PEOPLE, ACTION AND LEADERSHIP!**

## **How Can You Help As An Individual?**

*You can:*

- Contact the SF-IRC with your constructive ideas and support and give constructive feedback
- Contact your District Supervisor to express support of immigrant programs
- Take a proactive role and speak up for the immigrant community
- Donate/contribute available resources: financial support and manpower

## **How Can You Help As An Organization?**

*You can:*

- Contact SF-IRC with your constructive ideas and support
- Collaborate with similar organizations to streamline operations
- Conduct regular needs assessments of the immigrant community
- Strengthen/support programs for immigrants

## **How Can You Help As A Community?**

*You can:*

- Unite our voices, speak up and be heard
- Get rid of prejudices and misconceptions about immigrants and create a zero-divide community
- Create a tolerant, no hate-crime zone for the City of San Francisco
- Regard immigrants' problems as our own problems and problem solve together in a positive manner

## **How Can You Help If You Are A Politician/Policy Maker?**

*You can:*

- Listen to immigrants' pleas carefully
- Reach out to those immigrants who cannot reach you
- Make good on your own campaign promises for immigrants
- Watch out for policies that are cloaks for prejudices and discrimination

# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A:

### EXCERPTS FROM THE SUMMIT PROGRAM BOOKLET



## CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO IMMIGRANT RIGHTS COMMISSION

### A Message from the Chair

September 14, 2002

On behalf of all the Commissioners and staff of the Immigrant Rights Commission, I am honored to welcome you to this inaugural San Francisco Summit on Immigrant Rights.

This Summit is created with the vision and leadership of the Commission, sponsored by the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco and we are grateful for the strong endorsements of many community-based organizations, government departments and service agencies, as well as the support of many individuals representing these entities.

It has been an ambitious undertaking from the conception of an idea to the realization of the first Summit addressing Immigrant rights. This level of success comes only with working together and the Summit itself is strong evidence that through collaboration, cooperation, and partnership, we can achieve so much more than what we could possibly achieve alone.

Since September 11, 2001 and the huge downturns in the stock market, many of us have stepped back to reflect on our lives and our priorities. To the people who have been most deeply affected by the continuing burdens of these tragic events, we dedicate our efforts. It is our hope that the positive impact of this Summit will significantly affect the lives of our City's immigrants, and perhaps be so far-reaching that its benefits can someday be felt by immigrants across the nation.

Gathered today at this Summit are both the immigrants and those who care about immigrants. Today, your participation is a testimony about your compassion and your interest in helping a community that totals over 40% of the City's population. And only with your active participation can the objectives of this Summit ever be met.

I implore you to utilize this Summit to the fullest extent possible. I hope we may all learn from it, build new alliances, gain new perspectives and when the day is done, leave with a collaborative action plan in hand.

Take the extra step and get thoroughly involved, for we definitely are in partnership today for a brighter tomorrow.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Diana Lau".

Diana Lau, Chairperson  
San Francisco Immigrant Rights Commission



## APPENDIX A:

### EXCERPTS FROM THE SUMMIT PROGRAM BOOKLET

NANCY PELOSI  
8TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

DEMOCRATIC WHIP

2457 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-0508  
(202) 225-4965

DISTRICT OFFICE:  
FEDERAL BUILDING  
450 GOLDEN GATE AVENUE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102-3460  
(415) 556-4862  
n.pelosi@mail.house.gov  
www.house.gov/pelosi

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-0508**

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

SUBCOMMITTEES  
LABOR-HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES-EDUCATION  
FOREIGN OPERATIONS, EXPORT FINANCING  
AND RELATED PROGRAMS  
PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE  
ON INTELLIGENCE  
RANKING MEMBER

September 14, 2002

Diana S. Lau, Chair  
City and County of San Francisco Immigrant Rights Commission  
City Hall, Room 362  
Dr. Carlton B. Goodlet Place,  
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear Friends,

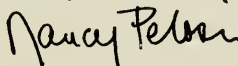
Greetings on the occasion of the First San Francisco Immigrant Rights Summit. The Summit is the beginning of a critical dialogue about the treatment of immigrants in our City.

San Francisco has always had a large immigrant population, and it is a place built largely on the hard work of immigrants. It is therefore astonishing that many immigrants do not receive equitable treatment in the workplace and in the community. The Summit provides an opportunity to develop solutions to this growing problem.

I commend the organizers of the Summit, including Mayor Willie Brown, the Immigrant Rights Commission, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, and the San Francisco Foundation for their efforts to inaugurate a public dialogue on this issue.

Best wishes for a successful and meaningful conference.

Sincerely,



NANCY PELOSI  
Member of Congress

**APPENDIX A:**

**EXCERPTS FROM THE SUMMIT PROGRAM BOOKLET**

**DIANNE FEINSTEIN**  
CALIFORNIA

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS  
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY  
COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION  
SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

**United States Senate**

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0504

<http://feinstein.senate.gov>

**September 10, 2002**

**San Francisco Immigrant Rights Commission  
Ms. Diana Lau, Chair  
City Hall  
San Francisco, California**

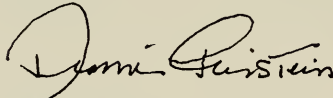
**Dear Chairwoman Lau,**

**I send my best wishes to you and everyone as you gather to host the first San Francisco Summit on Immigrant Rights. You have put together a who's who list of participant and attendees. I am sorry I cannot be there but my office will participate and be represented .**

**I will be most interested in the reports and recommendations of the Summit.**

**San Francisco has always been in the forefront for immigrant rights and this event is a perfect example of our city's citizens with a "can do" attitude.**

**Sincerely,**



**Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator**

## APPENDIX A:

### EXCERPTS FROM THE SUMMIT PROGRAM BOOKLET



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

## *Welcome*

### **First San Francisco Immigrant Rights Summit**

September 14, 2002

It is a great pleasure to extend a warm welcome to all who have gathered for the First San Francisco Summit on Immigrant Rights, hosted by the City and County of San Francisco Immigrant Rights Commission. This event is a valuable opportunity to bring people together to share ideas and address issues facing the immigrant population.

Immigrants to California have greatly enriched our culture and are a driving force in our economy. I salute the organizers and participants of this event for their commitment to their community. By working to increase the quality of life of immigrants living in the Bay Area, they have made a lasting impact on many lives.

On behalf of the people of the State of California, I extend best wishes for a successful event.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gray Davis". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Governor Gray Davis

GOVERNOR GRAY DAVIS  
455 GOLDEN GATE AVENUE, SUITE 14000 • SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94102  
(415) 703-2218 • FAX (415) 703-2803

## APPENDIX A:

### EXCERPTS FROM THE SUMMIT PROGRAM BOOKLET



## Greetings From The Mayor

September 9, 2002

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the City and County of San Francisco, I am pleased to extend greetings to the participants of the First Immigrant Rights Summit. This summit is organized by the Immigrant Rights Commission to showcase San Francisco's commitment to improving the quality of life for all immigrants. San Francisco has always been an example of how the different segments of our community can peacefully and harmoniously co-exist.

Today, we rededicate ourselves to the commitment that all people of the United States are entitled to find a better life for themselves and their families. Best wishes on a successful summit.

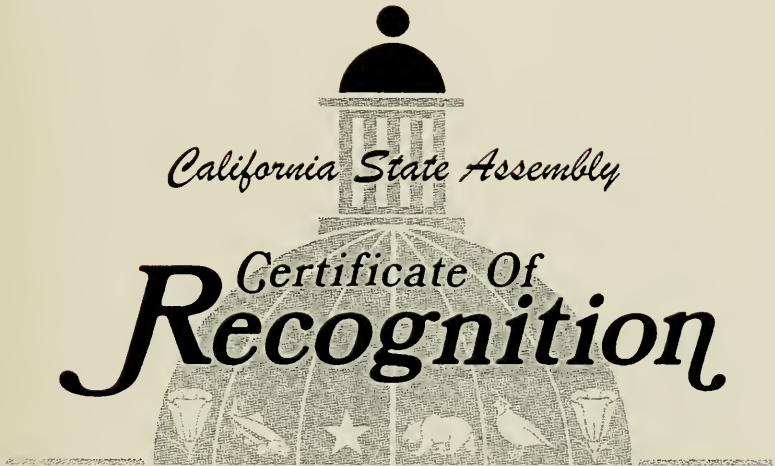
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Willie Brown".

WILLIE L. BROWN, Jr.  
Mayor

APPENDIX A:

EXCERPTS FROM THE SUMMIT PROGRAM BOOKLET



PRESENTED TO

*San Francisco Immigrant  
Rights Commission*

IN HONOR OF:

Your Extraordinary Contributions to the Immigrant Community and  
Strong Leadership for Immigrants Across the Nation. Congratulations  
on Your First San Francisco Immigrant Rights Summit.

September 14, 2002



*Kevin Shelley*  
*Kevin Shelley*  
MEMBER OF THE ASSEMBLY

*12th* ASSEMBLY DISTRICT  
CALIFORNIA STATE LEGISLATURE



## APPENDIX A:

### ENDORSEMENTS IN GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS

American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee  
Arab Cultural Center  
Asian Law Caucus  
Asian Pacific American Community Center  
Asian Pacific Islander Legal Outreach  
Asian Pacific Islander Wellness Center  
Asian Perinatal Advocates  
Asian Women's Shelter  
Board of Supervisors, City and County of San Francisco  
California Association of Health, Education, Employment & Dignity  
California Immigrant Welfare Collaborative  
Cambodian Community Development  
Cameron House  
Central American Resource Center (CARECEN)  
Chinatown Community Development Center  
Mayor's Office of Housing  
Chinatown North Beach Campus  
Chinese American Voters Education Committee  
Chinese for Affirmative Action  
Chinese Newcomers Services Center  
Chinese Progressive Association  
City College of San Francisco  
Commission on Human Services  
Community College Board  
Community Technology Foundation of California  
Emergency Communication Department  
Employment Law Center  
Equal Employment Opportunity Commission  
Filipino West Bay Community Service Center  
Global Exchange  
Green Party  
Immigrant Legal Resource Center  
Instituto Familiar de la Raza  
International Development Exchange  
Jewish Children and Family Services

La Raza Central Legal  
 Law Center for Families  
 Lesbian Gay Immigration Rights Task Force (LGIRTF)  
 Love Sees No Borders  
 Mayor's Office of Community Development  
 Mission Neighborhood Center, Precita Youth Center  
 National Center for Lesbian Rights  
 National Congress of Vietnamese in America  
 Northern California Citizenship Project  
 Office of U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein  
 Office of U.S. Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi  
 On Lok Senior Health Services  
 Palestinian American Congress  
 Russian American Community Development Center  
 San Francisco Day Labor Program  
 San Francisco Democratic Party  
 San Francisco Department of Aging & Adult Services  
 San Francisco Department of Children, Youth & Families  
 San Francisco Department of Human Services - Employment Services  
 San Francisco Department of Public Health  
 San Francisco Health Commission  
 San Francisco Human Rights Commission  
 San Francisco Human Services Commission  
 San Francisco Immigrant Rights Commission  
 San Francisco Police Department - Hate Crimes Unit  
 San Francisco State University  
 San Francisco Unified School District  
 Self-Help for the Elderly  
 Services, Immigrant Rights, and Education Network  
 Small Business Commission  
 Southeast Asian Community Center  
 The Women's Building - San Francisco Women's Center  
 University of San Francisco  
 U.S. Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (BCIS)  
     - previously known as U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS)  
 U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission  
 Veterans Equity Center  
 Vietnamese American Community Center of San Francisco  
 West-Bay Filipino Multi-Services Center

## APPENDIX A:

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Summit would not have been possible without the dedication and expertise of many individuals of which some are named below. For their generous contribution and valued support, the Commissioners and staff of the San Francisco Immigrant Rights Commission would like to thank these commendable volunteers and donors for joining us in the effort to serve our immigrant community.

#### Special Thanks

Willie L. Brown, Jr., Mayor of San Francisco

William L. Lee, City Administrator

Jack Moerschbaecher, Director, San Francisco Convention Facilities

Thaddeus Watkins, Facilities Manager, Bill Graham Civic Auditorium & Staff

Lucky Choi, Conference Coordinator

Harriet Ishimoto, Staff, U.S. Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi's Office

Hung Nguyen, Web Designer

Julie Ann Yuen, Graphic Design Consultant

Raymond Donald Hong, Computer Consultant

Len Fong, Media Consultant

Edward Goehring, Event Site Coordinator

Sonia Borg, Communications Instructor, SFSU

Jensen Chung, Ph.D., Professor of Communications, SFSU

Edith Wong, Printing Consultant and Donor

Clifton Albergotti, Artistic Consultant

Ed Sun, Website Consultant

Marta Donayre, Volunteer Outreach

City Hall Staff Volunteers

Robin Ho, Voter Education and Outreach of Department of Elections

Henry Lee, Administrative Services

Jill Lerner, Administrative Services

Lidia Pimentee, Voter Education and Outreach of Department of Elections

#### City Hall Interns

John Paul Capulong

Albert Carrera

Matt Sullivan

Mark Swartz

Rhea Wong

#### Other Students Volunteers

University of San Francisco



## APPENDIX B:

### AGENDA OF THE FIRST SAN FRANCISCO SUMMIT ON IMMIGRANT RIGHTS

Nguyen Qui Duc & Marcos Gutierrez, Masters of Ceremony

#### 9:00AM: Morning Conference - Polk Hall

Ceremony of Colors	Pledge of Allegiance Color Guards of the San Francisco Fire Department
National Anthem	
In Memoriam	A minute of silence to commemorate the lives we lost in the tragedies of September 11, 2001
Welcome	The Honorable Commissioner Diana Lau Chair, Summit Planning Committee Chairperson, S.F. Immigrant Rights Commission
Opening Remarks	City Administrator William L. Lee City and County of San Francisco
San Francisco Mayor's Proclamation	The Honorable Mayor Willie L. Brown, Jr. City and County of San Francisco
Welcoming Speeches	The Honorable Kevin Shelley The Honorable California Assembly Majority Leader The Honorable Chris Daly, Supervisor of San Francisco Mr. William Lee, City Administrator
Keynote Speaker	The Honorable Paul Igarasi Former Vice-Chair, US EEOC [Equal Employment Opportunity Commission]
Introduction to Workgroup Sessions	The Honorable Commissioner Vera Haile The Honorable Commissioner Joaquin J. Gonzalez, III Program Co-Chairs, S.F. Immigrant Rights Commission

Mid-Morning Break

#### 10:30AM: Morning Breakout Session A - 3rd Fl. Meeting Rms

Workgroup Panels:	
Identifying and Prioritizing the Issues	All Participants
	12 NOON - Mid-Day Break

#### 1:00PM: Afternoon Conference- Polk Hall

Special Issues Briefing on New INS Regulations	Isabel Alegria and Jeannette Zanitapin Senior Policy Analysts California Immigrant Welfare Collaborative
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**APPENDIX B:**

**AGENDA OF THE FIRST SAN FRANCISCO SUMMIT ON IMMIGRANT RIGHTS**

**1:30PM: Afternoon Breakout Session B - 3rd Floor Meeting Rooms**

Workgroup Panels:	
Strategizing Solutions	All Participants
	Mid-Afternoon Break

**3:00PM: Final Plenary Session C - Polk Hall**

Communicating the Mission Workgroup	Facilitators A brief summary report on today's efforts from each of the 10 workgroups
Next Steps	The Honorable Commissioner Diana Lau Chair, Summit Planning Committee Chairperson, S.F. Immigrant Rights Commission

**4:30PM: Ceremony - Polk Hall**

Celebrating a Fifth-Year Anniversary	San Francisco Immigrant Right Commission
Annual SF-IRC Community Service Awards	The Honorable Commissioner Isabel Huie San Francisco Immigrant Rights Commission Vice-Chairperson, S.F. Immigrant Rights Commission [June 2001-December 2002]
Presentation of Awards	San Francisco Immigrant Rights Commissioners

In recognition of the following organization for their outstanding achievements in providing services to the immigrants in the City and County of San Francisco:

- African Immigrant & Refugee Resource Center
- Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee
- CARECEN [Central American Resource Center]
- Émigré Services Program of Jewish Family and Children's Services
- The Filipino Airport Screeners and Union Local 790
- Housing Services of Asian Law Caucus
- Love Sees No Borders of the National Gay and Lesbian Civil Rights Organization

Acknowledgements & Closing Remarks	The Honorable Commissioner Diana Lau Chair, Summit Planning Committee Chairperson, S.F. Immigrant Rights Commission
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Adjournment

## APPENDIX C :

### BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILES OF THE REPORT AUTHORS AND EDITORS

#### **Diana Lau, RN, MS, CNS**

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Diana Lau was commissioned to serve on the San Francisco Immigrant Rights Commission since March 2001, became its Chair from June 2001 to December 2002, re-appointed by the Mayor in August, 2003 and was re-elected as Chair in January 2004.

In addition to serving on this Commission, she is past chair (1998-1999) and current board member of the American Heart Association (AHA), San Francisco Division, and serves as its member on the affiliate level on the Asian Task Force and on the national level on the Minority Leadership Committee, the Nomination and Awards Committee and the Awards Selection Subcommittee. She has acted as spokesperson on behalf of the AHA for different events in the San Francisco community.

Working as a trailblazer in the community, in addition to initiating the first Summit on Immigrant Rights, she also organized the first cardiac support group for Chinese patients with heart disease in San Francisco, and co-produced a television public service announcement to raise awareness and promote vaccination in the MSM community in the San Francisco and Greater Bay Area for a gravely serious but under-estimated health problem, hepatitis. She also has, in the early 1990s, developed nursing educational programs to assist foreign nurses to attain qualification for taking the Nursing State Board's licensing examination.

Commissioner Lau actively participates in different community events, and conducts as well as volunteers in health-related projects. She currently produces and hosts a Chinese radio health program "You and Your Health" at AM 1450, a popular Cantonese radio station, reaching out to the monolingual Chinese community to raise awareness on different health issues impacting the Chinese community.

Commissioner Lau was the 2003 recipient of the International Channel Network's Vision in America Award. She also received Certificates of Appreciation from Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi, State Assemblyman Leland Yee, and numerous community service awards from the Mayor, the Board of Supervisors of San Francisco as well as the American Heart Association. While under her helm, the Immigrant Rights Commission also received the 2002 Leadership Award from the Asian Perinatal Advocates.

Commissioner Lau's most recent accomplishment was the founding of the San Francisco Immigrant Voters Coalition in 2003, and spearheaded the organizing of the first San Francisco Mayoral Candidates Forum with a specific focus on immigrant issues.

Commissioner Lau, a clinical nurse specialist by profession, currently works as a Project Director at the School of Nursing, University of California at San Francisco.

## APPENDIX C :

### BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILES OF THE REPORT AUTHORS AND EDITORS

#### Joaquin “Jay” Gonzalez III, Ph.D.

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Dr. Joaquin Gonzalez III served as Vice-Chair of the San Francisco Immigrant Rights Commission in 2003 and was Co-Chair of the Program Planning Committee of the 2002 Summit.

He is also the Director of the Executive Master of Public Administration (EMPA) Program at the Ageno School of Business (ASOB) of Golden Gate University. In addition, he teaches at the Yuchengco Philippine Studies Program and is a co-investigator of the Religion and Immigration Project, both at the University of San Francisco. Commissioner Gonzalez brings a wealth of experiences as an Asian immigrant rights expert and advocate. He is the author of numerous studies on the economic benefits and social costs of migration. Outside of the classroom, he is also an avid community leader, actively involved in assisting new Filipino immigrants through the West Bay Multi-Services Agency, the Babilonia Wilner Foundation, and Immigration 101, a network that organizes workshops for newly arrived Filipinos.

#### Vera Haile

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Vera Haile, while serving on the Immigrant Rights Commission, holds a concurrent appointment as President of San Francisco's Commission on Aging and Adult Services. She is a retired social worker, agency director and formerly the director of North of Market Senior Services, 1983-96. She has also worked at Self-Help for the Elderly in Chinatown, 1970 to 1983. She has actively been involved on issues affecting the elderly, disabled, and immigrants, especially on welfare concerns. In her many years of dedicated services to the community, she has built a wide network of alliance with many community-based agencies and community leaders and has gained invaluable insights on the ethnic communities, immigrant services and San Francisco's governmental processes.

APPENDIX D:

EQUAL ACCESS TO SERVICES ORDINANCE



**EQUAL ACCESS TO SERVICES ORDINANCE**  
**SERVING IMMIGRANTS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCIES**  
**IMMIGRANT RIGHTS COMMISSION CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO**

What is the Equal Access to Services (EAS) Ordinance?

The Board of Supervisors successfully approved the passage of the Equal Access to City Services (EAS) Ordinance. This ordinance was approved by Mayor Willie L. Brown, Jr. on June 15, 2001 and would provide City residents with limited English-proficiency access to City services.

Departmental compliance plans will include translated materials, bilingual telephone messages, and adequate service of bilingual staff in the public contact positions within the Department or provision of translation service. All City Departments have a one-year period to comply with the EAS Ordinance.

What proportion of San Francisco residents may be positively affected by this EAS Ordinance?

As of 1999, the U.S. Census Bureau estimates that approximately 26% of the City's residents are limited English proficient and this population is expected to grow.

**What are Tier 1 Departments?**

- Adult Probation Department
- Department of Aging and Adult Services
- Department of Consumer Assurance
- Department of Elections
- Department of Human Services
- Department of Parking and Traffic
- Department of Public Health
- Department of Public Transportation
- District Attorney's Office
- Emergency Communications Department
- Fire Department
- Juvenile Probation Department
- Police Department
- Public Defender's Office
- Rent Stabilization and Arbitration Board
- Sheriff's Office

What are City Departments' obligations under the EAS Ordinance?

The EAS Ordinance requires City Departments (both Tier 1 and Tier 2) to provide services in a particular non-English language when:

- 10,000 or more City residents or
- 5% of the clients served by the Department or
- 5% of residents of the supervisorial district in which the Department's public service facilities are located are limited English-proficient and share a primary language.

What are the languages that meet the criteria of the EAS Ordinance?

Based on the 1990 Census, the only language populations that meet the citywide criteria are Chinese and Spanish. Additional languages may meet the criteria applicable to the Department if more than 5% of the people who utilize the Department's services are members of another limited English-speaking community. For most Departments, however, the coverage of the ordinance will initially be limited to Chinese and Spanish.

What specific actions do Tier 1 Departments have to take to comply with the EAS Ordinance?

Tier 1 Departments are required to translate the following to the required languages:

- Applications or forms to participate in a department's program or activity or to receive its benefits or services
- Written notices of rights, determinations of eligibility, award, denial, loss, or decreases in benefits or services, including the right to appeal any Department's decision
- Written tests that do not assess English language competency, but test competency for a particular license or skill for which knowledge of written English is not required
- Notices advising limited English-proficient persons of free language assistance
- Materials explaining a Department's services or programs
- Complaint forms
- Any other written documents that have the potential for important consequences for an individual seeking services from or participating in a program of a City Department

What specific actions do Tier 2 Departments have to take to comply with the EAS Ordinance?

Tier 2 Departments shall translate all publicly-posted documents that provide the following information into the required language(s).

- Information regarding Department services or programs, or
- Information affecting a person's rights to, determination of eligibility of, award of, denial of, loss of, or decreases in benefits or services

**What are Tier 2 Departments?**

Tier 2 Departments are all City Departments not specified as Tier 1 Departments that furnish information or provide services directly to the public and consist of at least 30 full-time City employees.

What is the role of the Immigrant Rights Commission in relation to the EAS Ordinance?

The Immigrant Rights Commission of the City and County of San Francisco is responsible for monitoring and facilitating compliance with the EAS Ordinance. It is also charged with the duty to work with Departments and complainants to resolve disputes arising under this ordinance.

Where can you file your complaints if you feel that the EAS Ordinance has been violated by any applicable City Departments?

Complaints may be made to the responsible Departments by telephone or by completing a complaint form. A copy of each complaint form will be forwarded by the responsible Department to the Commission within 30 days of its receipt.

If you have questions about this EAS Ordinance, where can you find out more information?

If you have any questions about the EAS Ordinance, you can contact the Compliance Officer of the Immigrant Rights Commission, Ms. Winny Loi or visit the Immigrant Rights Commission web site at <[www.ci.sf.ca.us/immigrant](http://www.ci.sf.ca.us/immigrant)>.



In Partnership Today for  
a Brighter Tomorrow

Una Alianza Hoy Para  
un Mejor Mañana

共同努力創造更美好的明天



**San Francisco Immigrant Rights Commission**  
**City and County of San Francisco**